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popery

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A

PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY,

IN SEVERAL

Select Discourses

UPON THE

PRINCIPAL HEADS OF CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

PROTESTANTS AND PAPISTS:

BEING WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED

By the most eminent Divines of the Church of England.

CHIEFLY IN THE REIGN OF KING JAMES II.

COLLECTED BY

THE RIGHT REV. EDMUND GIBSON, D.D.

SUCCESSIVELY LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN AND LONDON,

[B. 1669, D. 1748.]

CAREFULLY REVISED AND EDITED

FOR THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES
OF THE REFORMATION,

BY

THE REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

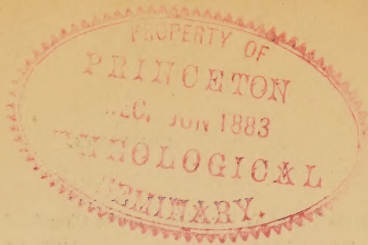
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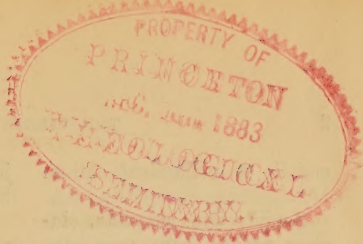
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THE
VIRGIN MARY TRULY REPRESENTED,
AGAINST THE
INVENTIONS AND MISREPRESENTATIONS
OF PAPISTS.

THE VIRGIN MARY
MISREPRESENTED BY THE ROMISH CHURCH, ETC.

CHAP. II.

OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN'S NATIVITY.

SECT. I.

Devotions to her with relation to her Birth.

THE devotions for her Nativity being, for the most part, the same with those upon the Feast of her Conception, there remains not much to be added under this head.

The old Roman Missal, and Missal Cluniac. begins thus.

Nativitas Mariæ Virginis	Let's celebrate the Virgin's
Quæ nos lavit à labe criminis	birth to-day
Celebretur hodiè,	With joy, who wash'd our
Dies est lætitiæ.	sinful stains away.

The Missal of Sarum thus begins on the Nativity of blessed Mary.

Gaudeamus omnes in Domino,
diem festum celebrantes
sub honore Mariæ Virginis,
de cujus nativitate gaudent
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Let us all rejoice in the
Lord, celebrating a festival in
honour of the Virgin Mary,
for whose nativity angels re-

angeli et collaudant filium Dei.

Audi* filia et vide, inclina aurem tuam, quia concupivit Rex speciem tuam.

Specie tua et pulchritudine tua intende prosperè, procede et regna.

Vers. Per te, Dei genitrix, nobis est vita perdita data, quæ de cœlo suscepisti prolem, et mundo genuisti salvatorem.

joice, and praise together the Son of God.

Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear, for the King hath desired thy beauty.

In thy beauty and comeliness advance prosperously, proceed and reign.

Vers. By thee, O Mother of God, the life that we had lost is given to us again, who didst receive an offspring from heaven, and beget a Saviour to the world.

In a following sequence we have these expressions.

O Virgo sola, mater casta
Nostra crimina solvens, da
regna,
Queis beata regnant agmina.
Potes enim cuncta ut† mundi
regina,
Et jura cum nato omnia
Decernis in sæcula.

Bless'd Virgin, and chaste
Mother too,
The bands of all our crimes
undo,
That by thy gift we may attain
That kingdom where the saints
do reign ;
To every thing thy power extends,
To thee, as Queen of Heaven,
it bends ;
Nothing to thee can ever be
deny'd,
Who with thy Son all titles
dost divide.

In the Reformed Roman Breviary, on the Feast of her Nativity, September 8th.

Capitulum. Ecclus. 24.

Ab initio et ante sæcula
creata sum, et usque ad futurum
sæculum non desinam,
et in habitatione sancta coram
ipso ministravi.

From the beginning, and before ages I was created, and shall never fail, and I ministered before him in the holy habitation. (Thus translated by themselves in the office of the Virgin. *Lat. et Eng. p. 47.*)

* Psalm xlv.

† Cœli in Mis. Attreb.

Hymnus.

Ave Maris stella
Dei Mater alma,
Atque semper Virgo,
Felix cœli porta.
Sumens illud Ave,
Gabrielis ore,

Funda nos in pace,
Mutans Evæ nomen.
Solve vincla reis,
Profer lumen cæcis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.
Monstra te esse matrem,
Sumat per te preces,
Qui pro nobis natus,
Tulit esse tuus.
Virgo singularis,
Inter omnes mitis,
Nos culpis solutos,
Mites fac et castos,

Vitam præsta puram,
Iter para tutum,
Ut videntes Jesum,
Semper collætémur.
Sit laus Deo patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritui sancto,
Tribus honor unus.

Amen.

Oratio.

Famulis tuis quæsumus
Domine cœlestis gratiæ munus
impertire; ut quibus
beatæ virginis partus, extitit
salutis exordium, nativitatis
ejus votiva solemnitas pacis
tribuat incrementum.

Per Dominum.

All hail Star of the Sea,
God's Mother clear and bright,
The happy Gate of Bliss,
And still in Virgin's plight.
Receiving that all hail (Ave)
Which Gabriel's mouth did
give,

Establish us in peace,
Changing the name of Eve.
The guilty's bands unbind,
Blind men their sight assure,
Ill things from us expel,
All good for us procure.
A mother shew thyself,
He take our complaints by thee,
Who being for us born,
Vouchsaf'd thy Son to be.
O rarest Virgin pure,
Meekest of all that wast,
Discharged of our sin,
Make thou us meek and
chaste.

Grant that our life be pure,
Make safe for us the way,
That whilst we Jesus see,
Our joy may last for ay.
To God the Father praise,
To Christ high worship be,
And to the Holy Ghost,
One honour unto three.

Amen.

A Prayer.

O Lord, we pray thee, be-
stow upon thy servants the
gift of heavenly grace; that
as the blessed Virgin's birth
has been to us the beginning
of salvation, so the vowed
solemnity of her nativity may
afford to us increase of peace.

Through our Lord.

Lect. 1. Cantic. Canticor.

Osculetur me osculo oris
sui, quia meliora sunt ubera
tua vino, &c.

Resp. Hodie nata est
beata virgo Maria ex progenie
David, per quam salus mundi
credentibus apparuit, cujus
vita gloriosa lucem dedit
sæculo.

Resp. Beatissimæ virginis
Mariæ nativitatem devotis-
simè celebremus, ut ipsa pro
nobis intercedat ad Dominum
Jesum Christum.

Resp. Ora pro populo, in-
terveni pro clero, intercede
pro devoto fœmineo sexu:
sentiant omnes tuum juva-
men, quicunque celebrant
tuam sanctam nativitatem.

Ad Laudes. Anaph.

Regali ex progenie Maria
exorta refulget; cujus preci-
bus nos adjuvari mente et
spiritu devotissimè poscimus.

Hymnus.

O Gloriosa Virginum,
Sublimis inter sidera,

Qui te creavit, parvulum

Lactante nutris ubere.

Quod Heva tristis abstulit,

Let him kiss me with the
kisses of his mouth; for thy
breasts are better than wine,
&c.

Resp. To day was born
the blessed Virgin Mary of
the progeny of David, by
whom the Saviour of the
world appeared to believers,
whose glorious life gave light
to the world.

After the Second Lesson.

Resp. Let us most devoutly
celebrate the nativity of the
most blessed Virgin Mary,
that she may intercede for us
with our Lord Jesus Christ.

After the Eighth Lesson.

Resp. Pray for the people,
intervene for the clergy, inter-
cede for the devout female
sex; let all those perceive
thy help, whosoever celebrate
thy holy nativity.

Mary, arising from a royal
stock shines brightly; we beg
with the greatest devotion of
mind and spirit to be helped
by her prayers.

(Thus translated in the
Latin and English Office fore-
named.)

O Virgin, set in glory great,
Among the stars in high
degree;

Whose breasts, when he was
yet a child,
Gave suck to him that formed
thee.

By thy fair blossom thou
restored'st

Tu reddis almo germine ;	That which sad Eve away had given ;
Intrent ut astra flebiles,	That wailing wights might mount the stars,
Cœli recludis cardines.	Thou hast set ope the gates of heaven ;
Tu regis alti janua,	The gate thou art of the high King,
Et aula lucis fulgida ;	The port of light that glisters clear ;
Vitam datam per Virginem	Since life was given by a maid,
Gentes redemptæ plaudite.	Let freed men shew joyful cheer.

On the 9th of September, the second day after the octave of blessed Mary's nativity, we have these three Lessons taken out of the 18 *Sermon de Sanctis*, attributed to St. Austin (though certainly none of his).

Lect. 4.

“ Exultat Maria, et matrem se læta miratur, et de spiritu sancto se peperisse gaudet: nec quia peperit innupta terretur, sed quia genuerit cum exultatione miratur. O fœmina super fœminas benedicta, quæ virum omnino non novit, et virum suo utero circumdedit ! Circumdedit virum Maria angelo fidem dando, quia Heva perdidit virum, serpenti consentiendo. O felix obedientia, O insignis gratia ! quæ dum fidem humiliter dedit, cœli in se opificem incorporavit: hinc promeruit gloriam, quam ipsa postmodum hausit. Ecce ait, ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.”

“ Mary exults, and joyfully admires to see herself a mother, and is glad she was with child by the Holy Spirit: neither was she frightened that she was with child, being unmarried, but she wondered with exultation that she had begot a child. O woman, blessed above all women, who never knew a man, and yet encompassed a man in her womb ! Mary compassed a man by giving credit to the angel, as Eve destroyed man by consenting to the serpent. O happy obedience, O remarkable grace ! Who, while she humbly consented, did incorporate the Maker of heaven within herself. Hence she merited the glory, which she afterwards gained. ‘ Behold,’ says she, ‘ from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.’ ”

Lect. 5.

“O beata Maria, quis tibi dignè valeat jura gratiarum, ac laudum præconia rependere, quæ singulari tuo assensu mundo succurristi perditio? Quas tibi laudes fragilitas humani generis persolvat, quæ solo tuo commercio recuperandi aditum invenit? Accipe itaque quascunque exiles, quascunque meritis tuis impares gratiarum actiones. Et cum susceperis vota, culpas nostras orando excusa. Admitte preces nostras intra sacrarium exauditionis, et reporta nobis antidotum reconciliationis.”

Lect. 6.

“Sit per te excusabile, quod per te ingerimus; fiat impetrabile, quod fida menteposimus. Accipe quod offerimus, redona quod rogamus, excusa quod timemus; quia tu es spes unica peccatorum. Per te speramus veniam delictorum, et in te beatissima nostrorum est expectatio præmiorum. Sancta Maria, succurre miseris, juva pusillanimes, refove flebiles, ora pro populo, interveni pro clero, etc.”

“O blessed Mary, who is able to make worthy returns of thanks and praises to thee, who by thy singular consent didst succour the lost world? What praises can the frailty of human nature pay to thee, who, only by thy commerce, hast found a passage to our recovery? Accept therefore our thanksgivings, though never so poor and unsuitable to your merits: and when you shall receive our devotions, by your prayers excuse our faults: admit our prayers within the holy place of your audience, and bring back to us the antidote of reconciliation.”

“By thee let every thing be excused easily, which we bring in by thee, and easily obtained, which we request with a faithful mind. Accept what we offer, give us what we ask, excuse what we fear; for thou art the only hope of sinners: by thee we hope for the pardon of our offences, and in thy blessed self is our expectation of being rewarded: O holy Mary, succour the miserable, help the faint-hearted, refresh those that mourn, pray for the people, intercede for the clergy, &c.”

The late Contemplator has invited us to celebrate her nativity in this manner, p. 50.

The Praise.

Hail Mary, full of grace, our Lord is with thee, &c.

The Hymn.

The morning star doth spread its ray,
 The sun e'er long will make clear day :
 Welcome, great Mary, herald of peace,
 Rich spring of grace, which never cease.
 This new-born light, which cheers our earth,
 Sums the world's blessings in her birth ;
 God's mother is this day revealed,
 Heaven's treasures are in her unsealed.

Glory be to Jesus and Mary ;
 As it was, is, and ever shall be. Amen.

Anaph. Who is she that cometh forth as the dawning of the day, beautiful as the moon, chosen as the sun ?

Psalm 44.

My heart shall pour forth words of joy, because Mary the mother of Jesus is born.

Above all women beautiful is Mary ; grace is spread through her soul.

Rejoice, triumph and advance, for thou art amiable and acceptable to God our King.

Justice, truth and meekness are thy ornaments ; the hand of God hath wrought them in thee.

Every creature shall bless the hour of thy birth, because Jesus covets thy beauty.

Anth. Who is she ?

Vers. Mary the mother of Jesus is born.

Resp. Let heaven and earth sing forth her praise.

Let us pray.

Grant unto us thy servants, O Lord, thy gifts of heavenly grace, that the birth of holy Mary may increase our acceptableness unto thee ; since thy Son Jesus, who was born of her, is the beginning of our salvation ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (This is but an ill and disguised translation of the former Collect : *Famulis tuis quæsumus, Domine, etc.*)

SECT. II.

Concerning the Blessed Virgin's Nativity, and the circumstances of her Birth; with remarks thereupon.

As we have hitherto found a great many bold assertions obtruded on us without any cogent proof, so the reader must expect the same entertainments still; and it cannot well be otherwise, where both Scripture and ancient genuine authorities are wholly silent, as they are in the things that concern her nativity. There are indeed prophecies in the holy Bible concerning her, but not as she is the daughter of Anne, but the mother of Jesus; not to tell us how she was conceived and born, but that a virgin should conceive, and the Holy One should be born of her; even the verses we now have of the pretended Sibyls, say very little more than that of her.

But the men of this Church cannot be contented and at rest, till they have filled every stage of her life with wonder and miracle. So they have done here in her birth; the circumstances whereof they make as glorious as possible may be, and to run parallel in most things with those that are related of our Saviour. The oft-cited bold Jesuit * thinks it not enough to call her (what the Scripture calls the Messiah) "the desire of all nations;" but, he adds, "that this woman was in their wishes before her Son, though he was much more noble and necessary for mankind. Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Christ, he saw it and was glad; but long before Abraham, Adam and Eve rejoiced to see the day of Mary, they saw it and were glad." Wherein he is seconded by another of his society, † saying, "We ought to believe that Adam foresaw this nativity to the rejoicing of his heart." So did Seth too, if you will believe the relation of J. Gerbrandus, ‡ who tells us, that in the year 1374, Sibylla, Queen of Hungary, causing workmen to dig in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, they found a tomb made of brick, with a body in it entire, over whose head was a tablet with this inscription in Hebrew characters, "I, Seth, the third-born son of Adam, believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, and in the Virgin Mary his mother, who shall come from my loins." A very likely story! much of the same nature and credit with that which is mentioned by Aquinas, § of an in-

* *Pozæ Elucidar.* l. 2. tract. 6. p. 494. [Lugdun. 1628.]

† *J. Bonifacius de vit, et mirac. B. Virginis,* l. 1. c. 5.

‡ *Chronic. Belgic.* l. 31. c. 26.

§ *Summa Theol. in 2. secundæ qu. 2. art. 7.*

scription upon a plate of gold found in a tomb, which prophesied thus, "Christ shall be born of a virgin, and I believe in him; O sun, thou shalt see me again about the time of Irene and Constantine." Or like that table which J. Boniface relates out of Cassinæus,* that in the sepulchre of Plato was a plate of gold found with this written on it: "I believe in Christ who shall be born of a virgin, suffer for mankind, and rise again the third day."

Neither will these prophecies suffice, unless miracles also prepare her way and accompany her into the world. Baronius is contented to tell us in general,† "that great things, and altogether admirable, such as cannot worthily be expressed, did precede the birth of Mary the mother of God:" and every one that questions this, he brands for a man of a narrow soul, and for one out of his wits. And his reason for it is very admirable: "because we know that great and strange things went before the birth of Samson and Samuel, Jeremiah and John the Baptist; and who can think so abjectly and meanly of God, or be so mad as to affirm, that he did greater things, and was more liberal to his servants than to his mother, to the friends of the bridegroom than to his spouse?" Or, if you will, to the handmaid rather than to the lady; for, in the language of another Cardinal,‡ "every faithful soul is a handmaid of the Virgin; nay more, even the universal church itself." If the Cardinal had been speaking of the graces that were necessary to make her beloved of God, or necessary to her salvation, his reasoning might have been allowed; but speaking of gifts (the *gratiæ gratis datæ*, as the Schools speak) which are measured by no rule but only the pleasure of God, who gives them as he thinks fit, being at perfect liberty herein both as to the kind and the degree; it is great presumption to argue and reason from what has been done for one, to what will be done for another; because God may deny that, for secret reasons of his own, to one which he may bestow upon another: and thus, for instance, he may resolve to make Samson's birth conspicuous by a miracle, and to conceal that of the blessed Virgin, and therefore work none when she was born. Not that I affirm that he did not, but that he not having told us that he did, no man can reason (unless he were as wise as God, or a privy-counsellor of heaven) that God must do it; or if he does not, that he is too sparing where he ought

* Lib. citat. 2. p. 137.

† Apparat. ad Annal. n. 40.

‡ Bonaventure in Speculo, c. 1.

to be more liberal in his donations. And I am afraid, upon these principles and arguings, we shall have but a sorry account why the Apostles, that were but servants, had the power given not only of doing the same works that the Son of God did, but greater than those; which we are sure is true, because Christ foretold it; or why his blessed mother did not work greater miracles than any of the Apostles, which we are sure she did not, but ought to have had such a power given her by the said reasoning of the Cardinal. However, he was so wise as not to mention in particular any miracle at her birth, as well knowing that none could be produced unless he made use of those fabulous authors to vouch for them, which he had before discarded.

But we have a Jesuit* to help him out even here also, who seldom fails at a dead lift, whose fancy and invention is so pregnant, that he can accommodate any wonderful story to his purpose: for Josephus,† mentioning a tradition, that all the time Herod's temple was building (which he makes to be about eight years) it never rained in the day-time, but all showers fell by night, that the work might not be interrupted, he takes the story for granted; only what Josephus thought was ordered for the service of the temple, he, forsooth, will have those night-showers to fall in honour of the Virgin, whom he would have to be born at this time; and to give it some colour, heaps up a deal of forced and metaphorical stuff concerning her, not deserving to be mentioned. He also‡ hooks in that miracle St. John mentions, chap. 5, of healing at the pool of Bethesda: this wonder he will have, nobody knows why, to happen in the month of September, when the blessed Virgin was born; and having found in some authors that Joachim had a house by the pool, and that she was born there, he presently concludes that this miracle was yearly iterated in honour of her birth, and he thinks it first began at the time when she was born, and that the virtue that was in it to cure the sick and impotent that were let down into it, was contracted *ex vicinia hujus domus*, by its neighbourhood to this house: he finds also a mystery in it,§ “that she washes away our filth like that pool, and was born there to shew how tender her care is of sinners.”

“We are further informed,|| that a numerous multitude of

* Poza, ib. l. 2. tract. 7. c. 1.

† Antiq. 15. c. 14.

‡ Id. ib. c. 2.

§ Ibid. c. 7.

|| Bernard. de Bust. Marial. p. 2. ser. 3.

blessed angels at the time of her birth, out of every order, did descend from heaven, and with ravishing music of all sorts, played the spouse of the eternal King into the world, singing sweet songs of ineffable melody." For thus, because we read that angels with their songs of praise ushered our Saviour into the world, we must believe that they performed the same office to his mother also at her birth. Nay, Poza* would have us think that not only angels' songs and harmony were then heard, but that all other creatures testified their joys, "because they were all renewed by Mary to their pristine state and condition;" I suppose he means before the fall. Pelbartus† tells us out of one Theophilus (no doubt an ancient and authentic historian), "that on the day of Mary's nativity the sun shone twice as bright as he was wont; and on that night the moon shone almost as bright as the sun, and that cloudiness that darkens her face for a time, did not appear from the day of her birth," (I suppose he means to the next new moon) "but it shewed like one great bright star about the middle of the lunar globe." This miracle had been better calculated for the day of her conception, especially that of the moon having no spots, for then it would have admirably declared that the blessed Virgin, whom they call the Queen of Heaven and the mystical moon,‡ had no spot or stain of original sin in her conception.

As for the year when she was born, they give us a formal account of that too, for thus Chr. à Castro§ has summed it up: "She was born September 8th, on the fourteenth day of the moon, on a Saturday, because the Dominical letter on that year was G., fifteen years before Christ was born, on the fourth year of the 190th Olympiad; 738 years from the building of Rome, L. Domitius and P. Corn. Scipio being Consuls; twenty-seven years from the first consulship of Augustus; from the victory at Actium, fifteen; in the eighteenth year of Herod the King; from the beginning of the world, 4073, &c." Baronius sets it|| one year sooner. If you ask how they came to know this so exactly, I answer, it depends chiefly upon this supposition, that the Virgin was fifteen years of age when Christ was born. And how know they that? I am sure not by Baronius's reason,¶ that it was the custom of the Jews to marry their daughters when they were adult; for that concludes no

* Ib. l. 2. tract. 5. c. 3.

† Stellar. l. 5. p. 2. art. 2. c. 9.

‡ Max. Sandæus entitles his book of the Virgin, *Luna Mystica*.

§ Hist. Deip. c. 2. p. 85.

|| Appar. ad Annal. n. 48.

¶ Ibid. n. 47.

more for her being fifteen, than fourteen or sixteen years of age: nor by the testimonies of any of the ancients of undoubted authority; for all that he produces for it is only a fragment in Nicephorus* of Euodius, bishop of Antioch, and successor to the Apostles, in an epistle of his called *Lumen*, though the Cardinal confesses that he never met with any ancient writer that took notice of such a work of his; and if any one examine it (as we may have occasion afterwards), he will find it plainly to be a counterfeit; or, as Bishop Montague† censures it, “that it was never the issue of any of the children of light, but the misbegotten and misborn changeling of an heretical father.”

But still, if all this were granted about the year, it makes nothing for the month and day of her nativity, which still remains as uncertain as before. In this they must be beholden to ecclesiastical tradition and its teaching,‡ from whence they have learned many other great secrets, and that determines it on the eighth of September; only they have an admirable art to back it with motives of congruity, as here in this case. “*Congruum fuit, etc.*” says Carthagera,§ “that she who was to be for ever a virgin, should be born in the month of September,” was very congruous, because in that month the sun going out of the sign of Leo, enters into the sign of Virgo, which plainly enough foresignified, that God, who otherwise roared like a lion, according to that, ‘Vengeance is mine, and I will repay,’ should now be born like a lamb of the meek ewe Mary, and like an unicorn, should lay aside all his fierceness in the lap of the Virgin.” Another says,|| “This was a very convenient season for her birth, that as the world, according to the commonest opinion, was created in the month of September, so the new creation of it should begin at the same time: besides, we know that this month does commonly abound with diseases, and therefore it is no wonder, if at that time in which dangers appear, the medicine and remedy against every sickness should be sent.” (Though these reasons seem to conclude stronglier for the birth of our Saviour in that month, than for hers.) Nay, in this way of congruity, they can tell us the very time of the day when she was born, that it was in the dawning of the morning before sunrise,¶ that so this circumstance of time

* Eccles. Hist. l. 2. c. 3.

† Raynaud. Dipt. Mar. p. 24.

|| Gononus Chron. Deip. p. 3.

† Acts and Monum. c. 8. p. 535.

§ De Arc. Deip. l. 2. hom. 2.

¶ Raynaudus, *ibid.*

might answer to the mystery, which in the hymns is called, "*Solis justitiæ aurora*, the morning of the Sun of righteousness." As for the place where she was born, they are not so well agreed. Poza, as we heard before, will have her to be born at Jerusalem, and he brings* St. Bridget's revelations,† and others to countenance it. But the most common opinion is that which Baronius mentions,‡ that she was born at Nazareth: so says also the counterfeit Epistle of St. Jerome, and the table that hangs up in the holy house at Loretto makes that church to be a chamber of the house of the blessed Virgin at Nazareth, in which she was born and educated, and afterwards received in it the salutation of the angel Gabriel. This chamber was taken from Nazareth by angels, and carried over sea, and after some removes, was at last placed by them where it now stands in Italy, by a highway-side. Chr. de Castro§ says that she was born at Nazareth, "*Inter ovium balatus, pastorumque hilares concentus*, among the bleatings of sheep, and the joyful consorts of shepherds:" and afterwards in his notes adds, "It is probable that St. Anne came over to Joachim while he lived with his shepherds, and there brought forth the holy child;" adding in the margin that Mary was born in the house of a shepherd, for which he cites J. Damascene, lib. 4. fid. Orthod. c. 15. "*Editur partu in ovilis ipsius Joachim domo*," wherein Castro commits a gross mistake, for the words of Damascene in the Greek are these, *τίκτεται* (sc. *Virgo*) *δέ ἐν τῷ τῆς προβατικῆς τοῦ Ἰωακείμ οἴκῳ*, where *προβατικῆ* is not a shepherd's dwelling, but signifies the place in St. John, v. 2. *ἐπὶ τῇ προβατικῇ*, &c. "In the sheep-market," we translate it, or gate, "there was a pool called Bethesda:" and he means, no doubt, that house of St. Anne at Jerusalem which Adricomius|| mentions, and places hard by the pool of Bethesda, and where, he says, Joachim and Anne often lived, and where blessed Mary was conceived (for he makes her also to be born at Nazareth). This appears by another place in Damascene,¶ where he wishes all good luck to this *probatice*, calling it "*Patrium Reginae domicilium*," and after, mentions how "once a year it of old received the angel that troubled the waters, and restored one person to health:" this by the way. However it be, whether as to the place Damascene be in the right or no,

* Ib. tract. 8. c. 3.

† L. 5. c. 13.

‡ Apparat. n. 48.

§ Hist. Deip. c. 1. p. 60.

|| Theatr. terræ sanctæ Jerusalem, n. 37. p. 153.

¶ Orat. 1. de Nativ. Virg.

we need not much trouble ourselves, but it concerns them much who are resolved to believe the fable of the House at Loretto, which this plainly contradicts.

These curious inquirers into her birth, that nothing may escape them, consider whether she came into the world the common way ; and one of them,* after all his search, professes that he cannot yet resolve whether she came out of St Anne's womb with her head or her feet foremost : only he has discovered to us thus much, that she might, if she pleased, have come with her feet foremost : for, says he, she having in the womb the use of her reason, she might have contracted her arms and other parts close together, and then there would have been no more difficulty in this than in the other common way.

It would be a great mistake to think, that when she came into the world, she cried as other children do. No, says one,† “she neither sighed nor cried, but expressed great joy in her face, smiling upon those that looked on her, and rejoiced with a multitude of angels that sang sweet songs at her birth :” which the former virtuoso‡ ascribes to that perfect wisdom wherewith she was endued from her conception, and her grave constancy, not to be altered by this new sight of the fabric of this world. Nay, so far was she from crying herself when she was born, that she did not so much as make her cry out that bare her. Those that think that St. Anne conceived her without pleasure, conclude from thence that she brought her forth without pain ; besides the congruity of it,§ that she who by her birth brought joy to all the world, should not tear her mother with grievous pangs. But the skilful Poza|| goes further (as he commonly flies at all) and says, “that by a miracle and God's kindness, St. Anne, when she went with child of her felt no burden, and in her childbed had no sorrows, for it was without pain, without the help of midwives, without fainting of spirits, or consequent uncleanness ; so that, excepting the miracle of the mother of God, before and after her bringing forth, all the other wonders are alike in the birth of Mary and Jesus.” He also concludes,¶ that the body of the blessed Virgin did shine at her birth with exceeding brightness ; for so, he says, we read it happened in the nativity of St. Herebert, St. Avitus, and St. Suibert, &c. And

* Poza, *ib.* l. 2. tract. 15. c. 3.

† Bernard de Bust. part 2. serm. 1. p. 133.

‡ Poza, *ib.* c. 2.

§ Raynaudus, *lib.* citat. p. 29.

|| *Ib.* l. 2. tract. 15. c. 7.

¶ *Ibid.* c. 3.

we know it is a first principle, that no other saint must outdo her, which, I suppose, their poet* intended, who speaking of her when she sucked, says,

“Stringere complexu natam, ferre oscula fronti
Non erat ausa parens, nec enim mortalis in illa
Humanusque decor, sed erat cœlestis imago.”

That is,

“Anne durst not with her circling arms embrace
This babe, and give fond kisses to her face.
Amaz’d to see such majesty combine,
With heav’nly graces and a form divine.”

As confidently does another assert,† that “from her birth and so forward, the Virgin’s sacred body breathed a perfume and fragrant smell, that so,” as he adds, “she might not be excelled by any illustrious person.” Plutarch having reported the same of Alexander, and God having granted it to several dead bodies of his servants, it can in nowise be thought that he would not bestow this honour upon her body, in which God intended to take up his dwelling afterwards.

There remains a great question, much debated among them, concerning her guardian angel: for it is generally resolved among the Schoolmen,‡ that every man from his nativity has such an angel appointed to keep and defend him; even Adam in innocency had one:§ only our Saviour, though he had angels ministering to him, yet he needed none to counsel or defend him. Poza,|| who would fain make the blessed Virgin in every privilege as like to her Son as may be, will allow her one or more, *ad famulatum*, for attendance and state, though not as a guardian; for that, forsooth, would suppose something of superiority, which must not be allowed over her: “She had,” he says, “an angel, just as she had the habit of penitence, which yet conferred nothing to the work and exercise of it, because she had no sin; only it was profitable to adorn her, and keep company with her other virtues. God would deny her nothing that he had bestowed upon others, therefore she should rather have *Angelum otiosum*, an angel that was idle, and had nothing to do, than seem to be wanting

* Mantuan. Parthen. Mar. l. 1. † Gononus in Chron. Deip. p. 3.

‡ See Aquinas sum. Th. p. 1. qu. 113. art. 4. 5.

§ Id. ib. art. 4. ad 1. 2. Fr. Albertinus de Ang. Custod. c. 4. p. 24, 29, 30. Becanus. in Theol. Schol. tract. 3. c. 6.

|| Elucid. l. 2. tract. 16. c. 3.

in liberality to his dear daughter." But Raynaudus assures us,* that the common opinion is that she had a guardian angel, and that this angel was Gabriel, according to that of P. Damianus,† who compares Gabriel and John the Evangelist to two lions, the one of which was deputed to be a keeper on her right hand, the other on her left; Gabriel watchfully preserved her soul, and John her body. But neither can this so easily obtain, but meets with great opposition. Aquinas‡ is of opinion, that the custody of single persons belongs only to angels of the lowest form and order: and another says,§ "It is certain that none of the order of archangels (such as Gabriel is made to be) is taken to this office of being guardians of men." Besides, we know, says he, that remarkable embassies are wont to be made by some prince, who does not familiarly converse with the person to whom he is sent; such was the embassy of the Annunciation, which therefore had not been so fit to be committed to Gabriel, if he had been her angel guardian: he thinks therefore that it was not he, but the chief of the order of mere angels to whom this charge was committed. But others|| are not content with one alone, (no, not if it were Gabriel himself) but that more besides were in commission to minister to her. Pelbartus says,¶ "many angels," according to that of the Canticles (chap. iii. 7.) "behold Solomon's bed, threescore valiant men are about it." Albertinus** thinks that almost an infinite multitude of angels did concur to her protection; which is plain enough out of Cant. vi. ult. "What will ye see in the Shunamite? as it were the company of two armies." Vulg. Lat. *Chorus Castrorum*, which signify her guardian angels.

Their authors also make very large harangues to declare the nobleness of her birth. St. Bernardine asserts,†† "that the blessed Virgin was the most noble creature that ever was in human nature, or ever can be begotten; for she derived her birth from forty patriarchs, fourteen kings, and eleven dukes. And we ought," says he, "to prefer her before all princesses, kings and queens, emperors and empresses, and before all powers, tribes and languages of the whole universe." Whither will not the folly of superstitious men carry them? and where

* Ibid. p. 26. † Serm. 1. de Nativ. Mar. ‡ Ib. qu. 113. art. 3.

§ Gononus, ib. p. 4. || Castro Hist. Deip. c. 2. p. 86.

¶ Stellar. lib. 10. part. 9. art. 2.

** Loc. citat. p. 28.

†† De Nativ. Virg. serm. 5. art. 1. c. 1.

will it stop? What nauseous, as well as insignificant, flattery is this? How would it have grated in her ears, if this story had been told her whilst she lived? We may easily guess at it by her own song, which magnifies God for exalting them of low degree, and for regarding the low estate of his handmaiden. But it is worse still when we hear her very sanctity flattered, and the merit of it proclaimed by another to be so great,* as to be the cause, "that after her birth all her kindred were holy persons:" though this plainly contradicts the Gospel, which says that, "neither did his brethren believe in him."† Unless Christ's brethren were nothing akin to his mother.

But the worst of all is still behind; I mean the abominable flattery of their devotions; their lowly addresses to St. Anne and her husband in their prayers, upon the account of being her parents, and bringing such a daughter into the world.

SECT. III.

Devotions to the Parents of the Blessed Virgin.

A noted Jesuit‡ exhorts men to "to worship the most holy parents of the Virgin with a peculiar reverence, for this reason, because they begat such a daughter for us, that they should give them joy of her, earnestly praying that they would commend them to the mother of God. For," says he, "we may easily collect that their intercession with the Virgin must needs avail much, because the authority of parents weighs much with good children." Which he seems to have learned from the Breviary, which in a hymn declares the same.§

"Qui optat sanctæ Virginis juvari piis precibus,
Devotus sit charissimis illius genitoribus:
Nam illis, dum impendimus honoris reverentiam
Devotam; ei reddimus et nato ejus gratiam."

That is,

"He that would have the Virgin's ear,
And by her pray'rs be helped out;
In worship of her parents dear
Let him express himself devout:
For whilst on them our honour we bestow,
To her and to her Son we kindness shew."

* Poza ubi prius, l. 2. tract. 15. c. 8.

† John vii. 5.

‡ Spinellus Deip. thronus Dei, c. 18. p. 241.

§ Breviar. Rom. antiq. ad 20 Martii.

DEVOTIONS TO ST. JOACHIM.

In the old Roman Missal, on the Feast of St. Joachim (March 20), they make this address to him.

Vers. O Joachim sanctæ
conjux Annæ, pater almæ Vir-
ginis, hinc famulis confer salu-
tis opem.

O Joachim, husband of St.
Anne, and father of the
blessed Virgin, from hence
bestow saving help on thy
servants.

A long Prosa that follows, concludes thus :

Vale, Pater inclyte,
Placa Regem gloriæ
In hac valle miseræ :
Clarâ Dei facie
Da frui in requie
Sanctorum sanctæ curiæ.

Farewell, great father, hea-
ven's blest King appease,
In this sad vale of tears and
misery,
Grant God's bright face here-
after we may see
In heaven, where happy saints
have rest and ease.

O pater Reginae cœli nos ad-
juva.

O father of the Queen of
Heaven, help us.

Amen.

Amen.

In the old Roman Breviary, March 20, they pray thus :

O pater summæ Joachim pu-
ellæ,
Quæ Deum clauso genuit pu-
dore,
Promove nostras Domino que-
relas.

Joachim, father of that blessed
maid,
Who brought forth God, yet
virgin did remain ;
See our chaste vows we make
to God, be paid,
And all our prayers promote,
when we complain.

Castaque vota.

Scis quot hic sævis agitemur
undis,
Triste quos mundi mare de-
fatigat :
Scis quot adnectat Satanas
caroque

Tost in this sea with many a
cruel wave,
Thou know'st we weak and
weather-beaten are ;
Thou know'st what combats
we are like to have,
Which flesh and Satan, our
sworn foes, prepare.

Prælia nobis.

Jam sacris junctus superum
catervis,
Imo præcedens, potes omne,
si vis ;

And now thou'rt plac'd among
the bless'd so high,
Thou can'st do every thing
thou art inclin'd to ;

Nil Nepos Jesus merito ne-	Thy nephew Jesus sure will
gabit,	not deny,
Nil tibi nata.	Much less thy daughter, what
	thou hast a mind to.

DEVOTIONS TO ST. ANNE, AS MOTHER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Anaph.

Fœlix* Anna cella munditiæ,	O blessed Anne, the cell of
Lumen mundi, vena clementiæ,	purity,
Spes salutis, porta lætitiæ,	Light of the world, the vein of
Nos divinæ commenda gratiæ.	clemency,
	Our saving hope and gate of
	consolation,
	Commend us to God's gracious
	acceptation.

Hymn.

Ave mater Anna,	All hail we wish to thee, St.
Plena melle Canna,	Anne,
Cui matrem passa	Who art the blessed Virgin's
Nulla coæquanda.	mother;
	Brim full of honey is thy can,
	There's none can shew me such
	another.

Ergo te rogamus,	Therefore still asking we re-
Rogantes supplicamus,	main,
Ut quod potes velis,	And thy unwearied suitors are,
Prece nos da cœlis.	That what thou canst, thou
Placans nobis natam,	would'st obtain,
Per te mundo datam,	And give us heaven by thy
Illa natum suum,	prayer.
Tu nepotem tuum.	Do thou appease the daughter
	thou did'st bear,
	She her own son, and thou thy
	nephew dear.

Another hymn speaks thus to her :

Quicquid hic deliquimus	All those impurities of sin,
Vitæ per immunditiam,	We heretofore have lived in,
Abstergas illud petimus	Through the grace of God we
Per divinam clementiam.	pray
	Cleanse and wipe them quite
	away.

* Portifor. Sec. us. Sarum. ad Jul. 26.

Another hymn calls her happy :

Quæ medelam vitiorum matrem gessit gratiæ.

Who bore the mother of grace, the medicine of our vices.

The second Lesson says thus of her :

Hæc est illa supernæ benedictionis terra, de qua cœlestis figulus ollam spei nostræ, composuit, quæ ex divini roris imbre conceptum verbum, humano generi protulit incarnatum.

This she is that earth blessed from above, out of which the heavenly potter formed that vessel of our hope, who when the Word was conceived by a shower of divine dew, brought him forth to mankind incarnate.

In the sixth Lesson thus :

O quàm gloriosa est mater ista, et quàm digna solenni attollenda præconio, quæ nobis matrem nostræ redemptionis attulit, et in illa testamentum hæreditatis supernæ inclusit.

O how glorious is that mother, and how worthy to be advanced by solemn praises, who brought to us the mother of our redemption, and inclosed in her the testament of the inheritance above.

Hymn.

O vas cœlestis gratiæ,
Mater reginæ virginum,
Per te precamur anxie
Remissionem criminum.
Memento mater inclyta
Quàm potens es per filiam,
Et nobis prece solitâ
Procura Dei gratiam.

O vessel of celestial grace,
Bless'd mother to the virgins' queen,
By thee we beg in the first place
Forgiveness of all former sin.
Great mother always keep in mind,
The power thou hast by thy sweet daughter,
And by thy wonted prayer let's find
God's grace procur'd to us hereafter.

The Missal of Sarum speaks in the same strain :

Tua proles est regina
In cœlesti patria ;

Thine offspring is a queen
I'th' regions unseen ;

Ipsa cunctis jam prælata
Nostra fiat advocata
In Dei præsentia.

May she that's thus advanced
prove
Our advocate with God above.

Postcommunio.

Beatæ Annæ Matris Mariæ
gloriosâ intercessione nos pro-
tege, de qua virgo puerpera
ad salutem humanæ nativita-
tis prodiit.

Protect us by the glorious
intercession of St. Anne, the
mother of Mary, out of whom
the Virgin mother came forth
for the salvation of human
birth.

These expressions of her being the medicine of our vices, the mother of our redemption, and being born for the salvation of mankind, if they be not of blasphemous, yet I am sure they are of doubtful signification, and such as ought not to be in any prayer. I find like expressions to these in the old Roman Breviary, on July 26, Lesson 1, which says thus of St Anne :

Ex hac clavis David (sc.
Maria) est fabricata, per quam
paradisi porta cunctis iterum
est patefacta. Ex hac est ple-
nitudo gratiæ nata gloriosa
semper Virgo Maria, quæ de-
dit cœlis gloriam, terris con-
tulit Deum et pacem refudit,
fidem Gentibus dilatavit, finem
vitiis posuit, vitæ ordinem,
moribus disciplinam donavit.

Out of her the key of David
(viz. Mary) was framed, by
which the gate of Paradise is
again opened to all. Of her
was born the fulness of grace,
the ever Virgin Mary, who
gave to the heavens glory,
bestowed God on earth, and
poured out peace, spread the
faith among the Gentiles, put
an end to vices, gave order to
our life, and discipline to our
manners.

It is a strange hard figure that can make these many things which the Scripture attributes to Christ, and by which it sets forth his glorious power in the work of our redemption and salvation, become fit to be applied to the blessed Virgin. One might conclude these men think it no dangerous error if a man in devotion should mistake Mary for Christ, whatsoever it is in belief.

As for St. Anne, all these encomiums already mentioned are not thought enough to set her out ; but many of their authors* go so far as to affirm that both she and Joachim were

* Cited by Raynaudus, ib. p. 19.

holy from the womb, and sanctified in it, thinking it not fit to deny this to them which is affirmed of John the Baptist. The venturous Poza* goes a step or two further, who, besides this early cleansing in their mother's womb from original sin, will have them also "never to have committed any mortal sin, and if any among mankind, no venial ones neither." There was also a kind motion made heretofore by Fulbertus Carnotensis† to make St. Anne the mother only of this child, and to have had no more, as the blessed Virgin bare no other but our Saviour. For, says he, "it was not fitting that the most holy parents of this singular virgin should be defiled with the propagation of more children, who were to provide for and educate her that was to be the alone mother of our Lord." Yet here I observe a strange oversight (and the only one, I think, that can be named, wherein they seem to have forgot a privilege to grace the Virgin withal) that even in their devotions St. Anne is made to be a mother of more children; for thus in the Breviary of Bruges‡ they sing :

Anna radix uberrima,	Health springs from thee,
Arborque salutifera	Thou blessed tree :
Virgas producens triplices.	From thy fair root
	Three rods did sprout.

So also Mantuan,§

"Anna puerperio fortunatissima sancto,
Tres habuisse viros, et tres genuisse puellas
Dicitur———"

That is,

"None had more lucky births than she,
Nor holier, for it is said,
She did three husbands wed;
By whom she brought forth daughters three."

The Revelations of St. Coleta|| explain this, telling us the names of her three daughters, *viz.* the Virgin Mary, Mary the mother of James, and Maria Salome. They also bring in St. Anne speaking to Coleta thus: "Though I was married to three husbands, yet both the triumphant and militant church was wonderfully beautified by my offspring," &c.

But perhaps they have made some amends for this over-

* Elucidar. l. 2. trac. 8. c. 3.

† Serm. 3. de Nativitat. Virg.

‡ V. Balinghem parnass. Marian. p. 396.

§ Pastor. l. 7. de S. Anna.

|| Apud Raynaud. ib. p. 27.

sight, by their devout addresses to these sisters, which I find thus :*

De sororibus B. Virginis.

O nobile ternarium
Sanctarum sororum trium,
Quibus nomen est Maria ;
Vestrum sacrum collegium
Imploro ad præsidium
In omni angustia.

Quæ erit Christo gratior,
Aut quæ sit acceptior,
Quam vestra sit oratio ?
Nulla sibi conjunctior,
Nulla sibi proximior
Quam sit vestra cognatio.

Tu virgo filii mater es,
Inde sibi quod imperes
Naturæ donat ratio ;†
Vos vero duæ cæteræ,
Estis ejus materteræ,
O quam ingens acceptio !

O sacred ternary
Of holy sisters three
Called by the name of Mary ;
In all my misery
To your joint aid I fly,
That I may not miscarry.

Who can pretend their prayer
With Christ can stand so fair
As yours for acceptance ?
None may with you compare,
Or say so near they are
Akin, as your relation.

Virgin, to thee alone,
The power to rule thy Son
As mother, nature grants ;
You two that are behind,
Will great acceptance find,
Because you are his aunts.

One would hope that the ordinary reason of every man that will make use of it should prevent his falling into such gross imaginations and such childish conceits as these strains of devotion do betray ; but after our blessed Saviour discovered more than once‡ whilst he was here upon earth, that in matters that related to the exercise of his office, when he was about his Father's business, the interposing of mother and brethren was unseasonable and unacceptable, and rather repressed by him than encouraged,§ to think by these considerations to move him in heaven, seems to argue such men forsaken of reason, and to have too little regard to the honour of God.

SECT. IV.

Concerning the Feast of her Nativity.

There now remains under this head only one thing more to

* Balinghem ubi supra p. 406. ex horis Sec. usum Roman. antiq.

† This is every whit as bad as Jure Matris impera Redemptori.

‡ See Luke ii. 49. Luke viii. 21. John ii. 4.

§ Christus non agnoscit viscera humana, operaturus facta divina. S. Augustin. Tract. 8. in Johan.

be considered, *viz.* "The Feast of the blessed Virgin's Nativity," concerning which Mantuan* has told us truly,

"Hunc antiqua diem fastis non intulit ætas."

That is,

"This day of old was not a feast to her,
Nor placed in th' ancient Church's calendar."

St. Austin has† asserted it for his own age, that "in the whole world only two nativities were celebrated, that of our Lord and St. John Baptist." Baronius‡ cannot tell the time when to fix the first institution of it. J. Baptista Thiers§ speaks in the same language, that "he neither can nor dare affirm when it first began in the Church." And he confesses that it is not to be found in the ancient catalogues of feast-days, being omitted in these following, *viz.* of Chrodegangus's Regulæ Canonicorum, cap. 74; Concilium 1; Moguntinum in can. 36; Carolus Mag. lib. 1. capitul. c. 164, and in lib. 6. c. 186; Hauto Basiliens. Episc. in capit. 8; Ludovicus Pius in lib. 2. capitul. c. 35; Concilium Aquisgran. 2. c. 46; Herardus Turonensis in capitul. c. 61; Nicolaus P. 1. respons. ad consult. Bulgar. cap. 5 and 11. Thiers|| indeed opposes Baronius for asserting¶ that "it is plain that the Gallican Church were ignorant of this feast in the times of Carolus Magnus and Ludovicus Pius;" and he produces against the Cardinal the Council of Rheims, can. 20. wherein both the feast of the Assumption and Nativity of the blessed Virgin are set down; which Council was held long before Charles the Great's time, about the year 630. But this learned man might have remembered that there is no mention of festivals in the canons recited by Flodoardus;** and though they are found in the canons published under the name of Sonnatius,†† yet Labbé adds in the margin, "by Sonnatius, as some would have it, for they seem to savour of a later age." And Binius, in his notes says, "There are some things in these canons which seem not to carry so much antiquity; and he instances in the feast of the nativity of Mary, which, says he, seems not to be ancient in these parts, since it is first said to be

* Pastor. l. 9. Septemb. de. nativ. Mariæ.

† Serm. 20. et 21. de Sanctis.

‡ In Martyr. Rom. ad 8. Septemb.

§ De Fest. dierum imminut. p. 332, 333.

|| Ib. cap. 9. p. 47, 48.

¶ In Martyr. ubi prius.

** Lib. 2. Hist. Eccles. Rhem. c. 5.

†† Concil. Labbé, tom. 5. p. 1693.

celebrated in France by Fulbertus Carnotensis, who lived in the year 1017.” But since France seems to contend for the glory of beginning this feast (as England for that of her Conception) the fairest pretence of its original is that which Thiers mentions out of the Capitula of Walter bishop of Orleans, cap. 18, about the year 868, under Carolus Calvus, where the blessed Virgin’s nativity has a place among the feasts. Lud. Cellotius, in his notes upon it,* judges the praise due to this church of Orleans for first celebrating it there, but he encloses it in this diocese, since neither Herardus Turon, Hincmarus Rhem., Isaac Lingonens., nor Theodolphus, though of Orleans too, make any mention of it: and Thiers acknowledges,† that in the Synod of Galo and Simon, the Pope’s legates, A.D. 1215, it was antiquated and out of use again in France, for it mentions only three solemn feasts of the Virgin, viz. the Annunciation, Purification, and Assumption, leaving out the Nativity (besides the Conception then first ordered to be kept). These things, though they seem to prejudice this instance of Walter of Orleans, yet we shall let it pass and fix here; since it is as good a time as can be to allow an innovation in this case for the blessed Virgin’s honour, forasmuch as just about this time another more considerable innovation was made by Paschasius Radbert in the days of Carolus Calvus, in the matter of transubstantiation. The Jesuit Inchofer, who could believe that the city of Messina in Sicily received a letter sent to them by the blessed Virgin, and has wrote a folio‡ to make it probable, could not choose but give this honour to that city to be before the rest of the world in celebrating this feast of her birth,§ and that it is beyond all memory how anciently they have kept it; but since he has not dated the time when they began to pay this honour to her birth, we are not concerned in it, but let it pass. Only because I have mentioned the blessed Virgin’s letter, though any one that reads the superscription and subscription, need look no further to know it is forged; yet because it is a rarity, I will set it down as the said Jesuit|| has given it us in Latin, more correct than ordinary; which, according to the common story, is a translation made by Constantine Lascaris (of the last age) out of the Greek, which was a translation of St. Paul’s out of the Hebrew, in which lan-

* Concil. Labbé, tom. 8. p. 648.

† Loc. citat. c. 18. et c. 51. p. 334.

‡ Entitled Epistolæ B. Virg. Mar. ad Messanenses conjectatio.

§ Inchofer, ibid. p. 110.

|| Inchofer, ibid. p. 115.

guage the letter is pretended to have been wrote by the Virgin herself. Thus it runs :

Maria Virgo, Joachim filia, humillima Dei ancilla, Christi Jesu crucifixi mater, ex tribu Juda, stirpe David, Messanensibus omnibus salutem, et Dei Patris omnipotentis benedictionem.

Vos omnes, fide magna legatos ac nuncios per publicum documentum ad nos misisse constat. Filium nostrum, Dei genitum, Deum et hominem esse fateamini; et in cœlum post suam resurrectionem ascendisse; Pauli Apostoli electi prædicatione mediante, viam veritatis agnoscentes. Ob quod, vos et ipsam civitatem benedicimus, cujus perpetuam Protectricem nosse volumus.

*Anno filii nostri 42. Indictione
1. 3 Nonas Junii. Luna 27.
Feria 4. ex Hierosolymis.*

*Maria Virgo quæ supra hoc
chirographum approbavit.*

But to return from whence we have digressed. Whatsoever was the time of the first celebration of this feast of her nativity, yet all acknowledge the occasion and foundation of its institution to be no other than a private revelation to a man of no name, who lived God knows when and where; (unless Mantuan's* authority determine it for one that lived on the top of a mountain in Cyprus :—

———— Super alto vertice montis
Idalii ———

* Loc. cit. l. 9. Septemb.

The Virgin Mary, daughter of Joachim, the humblest handmaid of God, the mother of Jesus Christ crucified, of the tribe of Judah, of the stock of David, wishes health, and the blessing of God the Father Almighty, to all the people of Messina.

It appears that you all, with great faith, have sent ambassadors and messengers by a public decree to us. You confess our Son, the begotten of God, to be God and Man; and that he ascended into heaven after his resurrection; acknowledging the way of truth, by means of the preaching of Paul the elect Apostle. For which cause we give our blessing to you, and also to your city, whose perpetual protectress we resolve to be.

In the 42nd year of our Son; Indiction the first; 3rd of the Nones of June; 27th of the moon; 5th day of the week, from Jerusalem.

The abovesaid Virgin Mary approved this handwriting.

And he might have said as well on a mountain in the moon, for any evidence in history). "This pious man," says J. Belet,* "praying in the night, heard the angels singing in heaven; which happened to him many years on the same night. Therefore he desired God to reveal to him the meaning of it; and he was told that their joys were occasioned because on that night the blessed Virgin was born, and they kept it as a festival. This man relates the matter to the Pope (nobody knows which), who, understanding that he was a grave and holy man, and believing what he said, did institute the celebration of this feast over all the Christian world."

Melch. Canus† has given a good caution out of P. Gelasius, "not to receive those histories which are produced without the certain name of the author; for they smell of the tricks of impostors that seek gain, or are the products of heretics." The same sharp censure he passes upon novel revelations, shewing how much "they prejudice the Church, who seek to adorn the stories of saints with feigned revelations and miracles, wherein men's impudence has not spared the blessed Virgin, nor our Lord Christ himself."

This great bishop and Jer. Xaverius, their missionary, were of very different persuasions in this matter; for this latter thought these things of so great importance for the salvation of the Indians, that in his History of Christ,‡ they must be made acquainted not only with the aforesaid blind and senseless revelation, but also with another additional idle story, which the legend§ had furnished him withal; how for the greater honour of the feast the *octaves* came to be added to it, telling his Indians, "that Pope Innocent IV. (A. D. 1250) ordered it upon this occasion; that after the death of Pope Celestine IV. the Cardinals in their convention not agreeing in their suffrages, the see was void eighteen months; whereupon a certain cardinal made a motion, that whosoever should be chosen Pope should appoint the day of the Virgin's nativity for a festival to all Christians, and besides they should spend eight days (which they call the *octaves*) in rejoicing, to try if by this means they might finish the business. They all agreed hereto, and immediately they agreed in their suffrages for Innocent IV. to be Pope, who gave that solemnity to the festival." Was not this a weighty affair, and a necessary point for the heathens to be instructed in to make them good Christians?

* De Divin. Officiis, c. 149.

† Loc. Theol. l. 11. c. 6. fol. 334.

‡ Page 18, 21.

§ Jac. de Vorag. Legend. aur. c. 126.

This that I have said is enough to shew that our Church has no blame laying upon it for letting this festival fall, which the ancient Christians never kept; and where it is observed stands upon such a weak and tottering foundation as we have seen.

But we abhor and justly reprove the calumny which Sanders would fasten on us,* that the English, “for the greater contempt of the blessed Virgin, do solemnly celebrate Queen Elizabeth’s birthday (September 7th) on the very eve of the Virgin’s nativity; the day of whose birth they set down in their calendar in small and black letters, but Queen Elizabeth’s in great and red letters.”

Which story of his, I presume, gave occasion to the spawning of more impudent lies by the Jesuit Raynaudus,† who reports, that Queen Elizabeth “caused the nativity of the blessed Virgin to be blotted out of the calendar, and substituted in the room of it her own birth-day, which fell on the same day, *viz.* September the 8th.” As to the latter part of which, every one may know it to be false; and it is so too as to the former: for the festival blotted out was a religious one; but I suppose neither he nor any one else ever heard of an office of our Church composed for that day, which he says, was put in the room of it; only it might occasion some bonfires and testifications of joy, such as were usual in London upon the 17th of November, which was the day of her coming to the crown, and yet it is not in the calendar either in black letters or red.

But if nothing were to be objected against observing this feast of the Virgin’s nativity, yet I am sure we have reason to be offended with those devotions (such as those I have already set down) which those of the Roman communion on this day offer up to her; and also with those scandalous and profane meditations upon her nativity which we find in their authors, a few instances of which I shall here subjoin for a conclusion.

Our late Contemplator‡ finds a large scope here for his languishings and sallies, unions and absorptions. “Divine Mary,” says he, “replenished with grace, and absorbed in the abyss of supernatural perfection, wonderfully increased the languishings of the angels, souls in limbo, and of her holy parents, for the hour of her birth.—She was inconceivably more glorious in being designed to be the mother of Jesus, and that her rich blood in Jesus should be the price of the world, the laver of

* De Schismate Anglic. f. 175.

† Dipt. Mar. p. 233

‡ Contemplat. pp. 45, 46, 48, 49.

sinners, and the purchase of the saints; and should be so pleasing to God as to be acceptable for the insurance of the purpose of the predestination of men and angels; for the raising an inexhaustible fund of grace in the sacraments; and for the propagating citizens of heaven, partakers of God's counsels, and partners in his glory. Therefore did all men and angels with earnest desires thirst after her birth, as an approaching prelude to all these inestimable blessings of grace and glory.—From the first instant in which the world was blessed with the birth of the mother of Jesus, heaven and earth seemed to put off mourning, and to be clothed with joy: for now the gates of paradise seem again to be set open, an eternal jubilee proclaimed, a general peace published, a free intercourse decreed between men and angels, and the throne of God's mercy erected on earth, and made accessible to the most enormous criminals.—This mother of Jesus now born, is the mother of Christians, because she ever hath the bowels of a mother's compassion opened to us; by mercy to us in our sinful state; by mediation for us, for the grace of Jesus; and by protection over us amidst the temptations on all sides set to entrap us. Behold, with what glory the sun this day ariseth to beautify Mary's entry amongst us; what homage and offerings the angels make before the cradle of their illustrious queen; what acclamations of joy resound from the souls in limbo, for the birth of the mother of Jesus.—With what alacrity all sinners salute her, their patroness, refuge, and advocate; and with what ecstasies of spiritual joy God's people are replenished for this comfortable birth of the mother of Jesus, the spouse of the holy Church; of the empress of the world, the gate of heaven, the throne of mercy, the ladder of Jacob, the morning star of grace, peace and salvation of her who shall bring forth Jesus, the author and finisher of our blessed hope.

“Resolv. I do from this moment acknowledge thee, O divine infant, to be the adoptive mother of my heart, the queen of my affections, and the empress of all the powers of my soul; and therefore I will daily pay unto thee the most cordial homages of my love, congratulations and eminent servitude, observance and supplication; and will, in all my spiritual combats, afflictions and distresses, have a confident recourse unto thy bowels of mercy as a child to his mother, as a sinner to the mother of Jesus, and as an outcast, banished the house of my eternal Father unto his patroness, refuge and advocate, &c.”

Another of their Contemplators* breaks out as if he were in a rapture, thus: "O my soul, let us mark this day with a better stone, with a mark of joy for ever, which gave at once a queen to men and angels; nay, a dearly beloved child to God the Father, a designed mother to God the Son, and a best beloved spouse to the Holy Ghost. O let my soul praise, love and magnify her for ever, who hath so singular near and dear relations to all the persons of the Trinity.—Let us join in admiration with angels in heaven, and say, Who is this that our desert brings out? Who and what do we think this child shall prove to be? A prophetess? Nay, more than a prophetess, more than an angel, more than an archangel, more than a cherubin or seraphin."

Another† cries out, "Her nativity is the pledge and pawn of our spiritual nativity and redemption, because for this end she was born, that she might abolish the debt of Adam's transgression, repair our innocency, appease the anger of the strict judge, open the gate of heaven, and bestow liberty on the captives." (And I wonder what Christ himself can do more for us.)

Another,‡ speaking of the joy her nativity does occasion, gives this as one reason, "because she is born among men, whose authority is as great with Almighty God as that of a mother uses to be with her only and best beloved son. Let us rejoice because our sister can do so much with God, that if she be propitious to us (which is the great thing they court), we may dare to promise ourselves all things from God.—Those brothers would have cause of rejoicing whose sister a king should marry, and count her most dear to him; much more hath mankind cause to rejoice, whose daughter is advanced to that dignity, that God himself defers that honour to her that is due from a son to his mother." Not to tire the reader with this Jesuit's blasphemies, I will add but one of his meditations more: "She was born under the same princes of the world and of Judæa, Augustus and Herod, in whose times our Lord was born (as, in all probability, many more were), that thou mayest know that this Virgin was born for the same cause for which Christ was born, *viz.* that the devil, the prince of the world, who now had possessed the hearts of men, might

* T. Carre, Sweet Thoughts of Jesus and Mary, p. 300, 301.

† Gr. Gallicanus in Marial. p. 70.

‡ Fr. Coster. Medit. 2. de Nativ. Virg. p. 22, 23, 24, 26.

be cast out. Our Lord broke his power, and cast him out by his passion; but our lady gave her Son a body (which it seems is the meaning of, a body hast thou prepared me) of her own body, by which he overcame the devil; and in this sense it is most rightly said, that this mother did break the serpent's head, and slew all heresies in the whole world, because she clothed the Divine word with human flesh, that by this flesh the devil and all heresies might be beaten down and destroyed." And by the same reason he might have added, if he had pleased, that she cured all diseases, wrought all miracles, raised the dead, and shall come at last to judge both the quick and dead.

SECT. V.

Of the Blessed Virgin's Name.

After her birth, the next thing to be considered is her name, which was given her presently after. Castro* produces authors, that St. Anne, her mother, imposed it: not that she did this of her own head (take heed of that mistake); for the spurious Jerome† has taken care, that as our Saviour was called Jesus, according to what the angel Gabriel required, so her name Mary was given her by her parents upon an angel's command. Nay, if you will credit their famous Idiot,‡ the whole Trinity ordered it to be so; and adds, "that Mary, after the name of her blessed Son, is above every name; that at this name every knee shall bow, as it manifestly appears, of things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue confess the grace, glory and virtue of this most holy name, &c." This perhaps might be looked upon as a high strain of a man besotted with superstition, were it not for the countenance that is given to such folly and impiety, even by the devotions of this Church, which I shall here produce.

SECT. VI.

An Office of the Name of the Blessed Virgin.

I find an Office printed at Lisbon, 1672, with this title: "An Office of the most holy Name of the blessed Virgin Mary, to be recited by the friars of the order of the most Holy Trinity on the seventeenth of September, by the concession of our holy

* Hist. Deip. c. 2. p. 87.

† De Ortu Mariæ.

‡ Contemplat. de Virg. Mar. cap. 5.

Lord Gregory XV. with leave to use it in all their monasteries and convents throughout Spain." In which you may find such admirable strains as these :—

Anaph.

A solis ortu usque ad occasum, laudabile nomen Domini et Mariæ matris ejus.

From the rising of the sun to its going down, the Lord's name is praiseworthy, and the name of Mary his mother.

Anaph.

Lauda Jerusalem Dominum, lauda inclytum nomen Mariæ.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise the renowned name of Mary. (Instead of, praise thy God, O Sion, which the Psalmist adds.)

Oratio.

Deus qui gloriosam matrem tuam nominari Mariam voluisti, concede quæsumus, ut qui dulce nomen Mariæ implorant, perpetuum sentiant tuæ benedictionis effectum.

O God, who wouldest have thy glorious mother to be called Mary, grant, we beseech thee, that they who implore the sweet name of Mary, may perceive the perpetual effect of thy benediction.

Qui vivis, &c.

Who livest, &c.

In 1 Noct. Anaph.

In universa terra admirabile est nomen tuum, Maria.

Thy name, O Mary, is wonderful in all the earth.

In omnem terram diffusa est laus nominis Mariæ.

The praise of the name of Mary is diffused into every land.

Vers. Magnificate Mariam virginem mecum.

Vers. Magnify ye with me the Virgin Mary.

Resp. Et exaltemus nomen ejus in æternum.

Resp. And let us exalt her name for ever.

Post 2. Lect.

After the Second Lesson.

Resp. Benedictum sit nomen Mariæ, cujus manus tornatiles plenæ hyacinthis.

Resp. Blessed be the name of Mary, whose well-turned hands are full of jacinths.

Vers. Implorantibus Mariæ nomen, Maria præsto adest.

Vers. Mary is ready at hand, to those that invoke the name of Mary.

Post 3. Lect.

After the Third Lesson.

Vers. Hæc est Gideonis vellus, quæ levissima orationis

Vers. She is Gideon's fleece, which by the easiest pressure

compressione, larga exhibit gratiarum stillicidia.

In 2. Nocturn. Anaph.

Refugium est in tribulatione Mariæ nomen, omnibus illud invocantibus.

Post 5. Lect.

Resp. Melius est bonum nomen quam divitiæ multæ. Turris fortissima Mariæ nomen.

Vers. Propugnaculum est omnibus qui ad illud confugiunt.

Post 6. Lect.

Resp. Nomen sanctum meum notum faciam in medio populi, et scient, quia ego Maria.

In 3. Nocturn. Anaph.

Nunciate inter gentes gloriam Mariæ, in omnibus populis mirabilia nominis ejus.

Anaph.

Annunciaverunt cæli nomen Mariæ, et viderunt omnes populi gloriam ejus.

Anaph.

Notum fecit Dominus sacrum Mariæ nomen, et in conspectu gentium revelavit virtutem nominis ejus.

of prayer, does afford large drops of graces.

The name of Mary is a refuge in tribulation, to all that call upon it.

After the Fifth Lesson.

Resp. A good name is better than much riches. The name of Mary is a most strong tower.

Vers. It is a fortress to all that fly unto it.

After the Sixth Lesson.

Resp. I will make known my holy name in the midst of my people, and they shall know that I am Mary, (instead of, I am the Lord.)

Declare among the Gentiles the glory of Mary; and the wonders of her name among all people.

The heavens have declared the name of Mary, and all people have seen her glory.

The Lord hath made known the sacred name of Mary, and hath revealed the power of her name in the sight of the heathen.

The seventh, eighth, and ninth lessons are taken out of the homilies, falsely ascribed to St. Bernard, *super missus est*. Where, commenting upon the name of Mary, and calling her *Maria stella*, the star of the sea, you have these following directions.

Lect. 8.

O qui te intelligis in hujus sæculi profluvio, magis inter procellas et tempestates fluctuare, quam per terram ambulare, ne avertas oculos a fulgore hujus sideris, si non vis obrui procellis. Si insurgant venti tentationum, si incurras scopulos tribulationum, respice stellam, voca Mariam: si jactaris superbiæ undis, si ambitionis, si detractationis, si æmulationis, respice stellam, voca Mariam: si iracundia aut avaritia, aut carnis illecebra naviculam concusserit mentis, respice ad Mariam: si criminum immanitate turbatus, conscientiae foeditate confusus, judicis horrore perterritus, barathro incipias absorberi tristitiæ, desperationis abyso, cogita Mariam.

Lect. 9.

In periculis, in angustiis, in rebus dubiis Mariam cogita, Mariam invoca: non recedat ab ore, non recedat a corde: et ut impetres ejus orationis suffragium, non deseras conversationis exemplum. Ipsam sequens non devias: ipsam rogans non desperas; ipsam cogitans non erras; ipsa tenente non corruis; ipsa protegente non metuis; ipsa duce non fatigaris, &c.

Lesson 8.

O thou that in this world's sea, knowest that thou rather art tossed amongst storms and tempests, than that thou walkest upon firm land; turn not away thine eyes from the brightness of this star, if thou wouldest not be overwhelmed with the storms: if the winds of temptation do arise, if thou fallest foul upon the rocks of tribulation, look towards the star, call upon Mary. If thou art tossed with the waves of pride, of ambition, of detractation, of emulation, look towards the star, call upon Mary. If anger or avarice, or the enticings of the flesh shake the vessel of thy mind, look towards Mary. If being troubled with the greatness of thy crimes, confounded with the foulness of thy conscience, affrighted with the horror of thy judge; thou beginnest to be swallowed up in the gulph of sadness, and the abyss of despair, think on Mary.

Lesson 9.

In dangers and straits, when thy affairs are doubtful, think on Mary, call upon Mary: let her not depart from thy mouth, nor from thy heart; and that thou mayest obtain the suffrage of her prayer, do not forsake the example of her conversation. By following her thou shalt not wander; by asking her thou wilt not despair; by thinking on her

thou shalt not err ; whilst she has hold of thee, thou wilt not fall ; whilst she protects thee, thou wilt not fear ; when she goes before thee, thou wilt not be weary, &c.

Anaph.

Benedictus deus qui Mariæ virgini lucis nomen donavit, ut illuminaret eos qui in tenebris sedent, et ut Stella Maris errantes dirigeret in portum salutis.

Blessed be God, who has bestowed on the Virgin Mary a name of light, that she might enlighten those that sit in darkness, and as the star of the sea, direct those that wander, into a safe port.

After this Office follows a Mass of the most holy Name of the Virgin Mary.

In the Salisbury Breviary, upon the nativity of the blessed Virgin (ad Sept. 8. *sexta die infra Octavas*) you may find three lessons that are a descant upon her name : as follows.

Lect. 1.

Hæc electa et insignis inter filias, non fortuitò quidem aut solo placito parentum ut plerique, sed divina dispensatione nomen accepit, ita ut ipsâ quoque vocabuli sui figurâ magnum quoddam innueret, interpretatur enim Maris Stella.

Lesson 1.

This elect Virgin, and renowned among the daughters, did not receive her name by chance, or as most do, by the sole pleasure of her parents, but by divine dispensation ; so that the very figure of her name might intimate some great thing, for it is, being interpreted, the Star of the sea.

Lect. 2.

Quid ergo mysticum interpretatio gerat persimilitudinem ostendamus. Nautis quippe per mare transeuntibus notare opus est stellam, non longè à summo cœli cardine corruscantem, et ex respectu illius æstimare atque dirigere cursum suum, ut portum destinatum apprehendere possint.

Lesson 2.

Let us shew by the similitude what mystery the interpretation carries. Mariners, when they pass through the sea, it behoves them to observe a bright star not far from the zenith, and with respect to it to estimate and direct their course, that they may come to their designed haven.

Lect. 3.

Simili modo, fratres, oportet universos Christicolæ inter fluctus hujus sæculi remigantes, attendere maris stellam hanc, id est, Mariam, quæ summo rerum Cardini Deo proxima est, et respectu exempli ejus cursum dirigere. Quod qui fecerit, non jactabitur vanæ gloriæ vento, non frangetur scopulis adversorum, nec absorbebitur Scyllæ voragine voluptatum, sed prosperè veniet ad portum quietis æternæ.

Lesson 3.

In like manner, brethren, it behoves all Christians that ply through the waves of this world, to attend to this star of the sea, that is, Mary, who is next to God, who is at the top of all things, and to direct their course regarding her example. Whosoever does thus, shall not be tossed with the wind of vain glory, nor be split upon the rocks of adversity, nor swallowed up in the dangerous gulph of pleasures, but shall safely come to the harbour of eternal rest.

SECT. VII.

Remarks on what their Offices and Authors say concerning the Blessed Virgin's Name.

The whole discourse of their authors upon this subject is made up of two things, folly and profaneness; folly, by childish toying with the several significations of the Virgin's name, and finding great mysteries in every letter of it; profaneness, by attributing those effects to the pronouncing and using of it, which makes it look like a charm; and applying such things to her name, which can only be given to God and our Saviour, as we have seen in the foregoing Offices, and will farther appear in the sequel of our discourse.

That there was a mystery in our Saviour's name, and that it was intended to be significative to us when he was called Jesus, we are sure, because the Scripture tells us so: and a learned man* has well observed, that as there is no mention there of any message of an angel to impose this name of Mary on her; so if there had been any mystery in it, the Scripture would not have been silent, in all likelihood, to have declared it. The name of Mary was a common name at that time among the Jews, and many Marys are mentioned in the Gospels; and as now the names of the Apostles and other holy

* Rivet. Apolog. pro S. Virg. Maria, l. 1. c. 9.

persons are given to children, so it is probable that the name of Mary was given to many of their daughters in memory of Moses's sister Miriam (for that is the same with Mary.)

But though there need be no further inquiry into that, for the imposing of which we read of no extraordinary reason, yet this will not satisfy her devotees : they examine all the significations of Hebrew words from whence it can be derived, and commonly pitch upon that which is most improbable. Jerome Xaverius* will not let his Indians be ignorant that her name has several significations; Maria is as much as *alta*, high, (and that indeed is the most likely, from the Hebrew, מַרִּים, to exalt) *Maris amaritudo*, (or, as others, *amarum mare*) a bitter sea : *Magister seu Dominus maris*, a master or lord of the sea, (he should have said lady.) St. Jerome† mentions several others ; as *Illuminatrix mea*, she that enlightens me ; or, *Smyrna maris*,¹ the myrrh of the sea. But in another place‡ he pitches rather upon *amarum mare*, or *Stella maris*, bitter sea, or star of the sea. Which latter, some learned men think,§ should rather be read *Stilla maris*, a drop of the sea, because the Hebrew מַר signifies Stilla, but no word in Hebrew like it answers to Stella. The pretended Epiphanius|| says, that Mary is wont to be interpreted *Domina* and *Spes*, Lady and Hope, for she brought forth our Lord, who is the hope of the whole world.

These are all far fetched, and must be so strained by fancy to make them suit to her, that it is pity to insist farther on them. St. Ambrose¶ has a signification of the word that is somewhat to the purpose, *viz. Deus ex genere meo*, “God of my offspring ;” which Poza** approves ;” but adds, “that he cannot see from what Hebrew root it can be made out :” but Castro†† has made a conjecture, and thinks it may be compounded of מִן the preposition, רֶחֶם signifying the womb, and יְהוָה the name of God, which put together, must then sound Merehemjah, and by contraction, Meriah : but all learned men almost agree that the Hebrew מִרְיָם Mirjam, is *dissyllabum*, a word of two syllables, not compounded but simple, and therefore excludes all this fooling. Now amongst all this variety of significations which they produce, it is pretty

* Hist. Christi persic. p. 18.

† De Nom. Hebraic.

‡ De nomin. super Matthæum.

§ Rivet ibid. Drusius Comment. post. ad voc. Nov. Test. c. 15.

|| Orat. de Laud. Virg.

¶ De Instit. Virg. c. 5.

** Elucid. l. 2. tr. 17. c. 11.

†† Hist. Deip. c. 2. p. 93.

to observe that the most unlikely of them all, *viz. Stella maris*, the Star of the sea, is that which they generally make choice of and declaim upon. You have seen before the explication of it out of the Breviary of Sarum: that noted hymn, *Ave maris Stella*, gives her this title, Hail, Star of the sea; and some have made whole books* to explain it, and apply it to her. Erasmus,† in his Colloquies, brings in the mariners in a storm, imploring the help of the blessed Virgin, and giving her the sweet titles of star of the sea, queen of heaven, lady of the world, port of safety, and many more which are never to be found in the Scriptures; and he wonders, “what she has to do with the sea, since,” as he supposes, “she never sailed.” He gives a probable account of it, that of old the goddess Venus had the care of mariners, who was believed to spring from the sea (and was called also *Stella matutina*, the morning star); but since she was discharged of that office, “the Virgin Mother is substituted in the room of her that was a mother and no virgin.” But alas! this is a poor conceit, compared with that of Pet. Chrysologus,‡ who may fully satisfy any that questions what she has to do with the sea: for, says he, *Quomodo non Maria mare? Congregationes inquit aquarum vocavit Maria*, “Mary must needs be the sea, for the gathering together of the waters called he (Maria) seas:” to signify, says Novarinus,§ “that Mary was to be the place where all graces should be collected.” Carthagena adds,|| “that God was so much in love with this name of Mary, that he would not let slip this slight occasion, but therefore called the collection of waters seas (Maria); *ut sic primus omnium Mariam pronunciaret*, that he might be the first that should pronounce the name of Mary.” This indeed supposes that the language God spake in the first creation was Latin; which if you will but grant (and what pity is it not to grant it rather than lose so precious a conceit) they can easily answer another objection, taken from the different pronounciation and quantity of the middle syllable of the two, *Marias*, that which signifies seas being short; and *Maria*, that signifies the Virgin, being long. “There is a mystery in that,” says the Homilist,¶ last named, “to signify the dilating and extending her dominion from sea to

* Fr. Bonaldus’s *Stella mystica*; a book to explain this hymn.

† Colloq. de Naufragio.

‡ Serm. 146, if it be his, for Bellarmine de Ser. Eccles. reckons only 122 Homilies of his.

§ Umbr. Virg. n. 1153.

|| Lib. 2. de arc. deip. Hom. 6.

¶ Ib. p. 167.

sea, and to the world's end ; therefore God would have it pronounced long, not short." Or you may have another reason from Novarinus,* "that by staying longer in the pronouncing this name, we may find the more pleasure and sweetness in it," which their saints have found by comfortable experience. For he tells us of St. Hermannus,† that when he heard Mary named, he used to fall flat on the ground with his face, and stay some while before he arose ; and being asked the reason, he said, that when upon the naming of her he cast himself on the ground, there was such a smell of flowers and perfumes came from the earth into his nostrils, that he could have been content to fix always there if he might ; and therefore he used to call the Virgin Mary his rose. Cæsarius‡ also tells us of a matron that could not pronounce the name of our lady without a sensible and wonderful sweetness (not to her smell, but to her taste), for by repeating fifty *Ave Marias* daily, in the time of her prayers, all the spittle of her mouth seemed to be turned into honey. The same was tried by Marsilius (to whom she confessed this) for six weeks with the same effect, and also by a third monk. And we are told of B. Ida of Lovaine,§ that she began an *Ave Mary* on a certain day ; but by reason of the exceeding abundant delight she found, she scarce finished the saying of it in two days' time. This, I hope, is a reason sufficient why her name should not have a short pronunciation, and methinks may serve to prove that every syllable (not the middle one only) of Maria should be long.

If all this be not enough to shew how properly she is called the Sea, you may hear it further made out by the consideration of a kind of immensity|| in her liberality, which can no more be exhausted than the sea, and the multitude of her mercies which cannot be numbered no more than the sand upon its shore. But though she be a sea, and the star of the sea, yet why is she a bitter sea, *amarum mare* (which was one of the significations we heard before of her name). Can that name which we just now heard, has been as sweet as honey to the taste, be bitter too ? Yes, very well, in the sense of St. Bonaventure,¶ a bitter sea, *Diabolum submergendo*, "by drowning the devil, as the Red Sea was bitter to the Egyptians when they were drowned therein." But enough of the signification of her

* Umbr. Virg. p. 338. n. 1153.

† Lib. 7. Mirac. cap. 50.

|| Novarinus, ib. n. 1154.

† Ib. n. 1124. ex Surio ad Apr. 7.

§ Novarin. ib. n. 1337.

¶ In speculo Virg. c. 1.

name. Let us now see a little how childishly they endeavour to find great mysteries in every letter of it.

One that was employed by the Pope to make an Office for the feast of her Conception,* (and therefore to be looked upon as a man of note, and one that had examined thoroughly all things relating to the blessed Virgin) has observed I know not how many fine things in the word Maria,† which make for her honour. The five letters of her name signify five precious stones with their properties. M. *Margarita* (a pearl), I never knew that was a stone before; A. *adamas* (a diamond); R. *Rubinus* (a ruby); I. *Jaspis* (a jasper); A. *Amethystus* (an amethyst. He finds also in these five letters the five benefits she confers on the world; as *mediatrix*, *auxiliatrix*, *reparatrix*, *reconciliatrix*, *illuminatrix*, and *advocata*. That is, “she that mediates on our behalf is the helper of our salvation, a repairer and reconciler of us to God; she that enlightens us, and is our advocate.” Or as others will have it,‡ M. *Mater misericordiæ*, A. *Advocata afflictorum*, R. *Refugium redeuntium*, I. *Inventrix Justitiæ*, A. *Amica Angelorum*. That is, “the mother of mercy, the advocate of the afflicted, the refuge of those that repent and return, the inventor of justice, and the friend of angels.” Another§ finds in them her five principal virtues. “By M. is shewn her faith; for that letter is made up of three I’s bound together, to shew that she had the perfect knowledge and faith in the Trinity; for as three I’s joined together make one M; so the three Divine Persons, joined by generation and procession, make but one God.” (And it may be this is it which the Salisbury Breviary means in the forecited expression, that *ipsa vocabuli sui figura*, &c. “The very figure of her name does intimate some great matter.”) “By the second letter A. is signified her hope; by R. her charity; by I. her humility, and by A. her bounty.” And I will forfeit my credit if any man can imagine how these four last should be made out of those letters without consulting his words, which yet I do not think worth setting down, nor a great deal more of the same kind you may find there: for indeed in this way any man may find any thing he pleases; it being merely such fooling as school-boys use with, “I love my love with an A,” &c. I could fancy nothing else but this, when I saw him

* Bernard. de Busto, who cites often this Office in his *Mariale*.

† Id. *Marial*. part. 3. ser. 1. See also Carthagera, lib. 2. hom. 6.

‡ V. Rivet. *Apol. pro Mar. Virg.* p. 65.

§ Ambro. *Servita apud Bernard. de Bust.* ib. p. 235.

running all her excellencies through all the letters of the alphabet,* and making a prayer to her upon every one of them, *ex. gr.* “A. Advocate of mankind (*advocata humani generis*) do thou defend our cause and pray for us. B. Blessed above all women; make us to be blessed by thy Son.” And so he proceeds with the rest (only is sadly put to it, as the boys use to be, with the two letters K and Q, for which he puts *Karismatum Dei Dispensatrix, et Quartæ Hierarchiæ Præsidents*). Pelbartus† not only runs such descant upon the five letters of her name, but he adds this further conceit, that it was very fit that her name should consist of five letters (though the Hebrew מרים has but four): for thus it admirably corresponds to several mysteries: as first, to the mystery of the divine conception; for, says he, “she conceived Christ by five words.” (Luc. i.) *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum, i. e.* “Be it according to thy word.” Second, to the mystery of the eucharist, in five words again, *Hoc est enim corpus meum*: “For this is my body.” Third, to the mystery of our redemption, for the accomplishment of which Christ received five wounds. But there is a Jesuit‡ finds as great a mystery in it, or greater, supposing it to consist but of four letters; for he would have it to be *Tetragrammaton*, a name like that of God, with four letters (יהוה) which the Jews refuse to pronounce; and he tells us that St. Gerard§ in like manner taught the Hungarians not to pronounce the name Mary, but that they should call her Lady (*Dominam*), and if any did name her, they should do it with great reverence, bending their knees, and bowing their heads, and uncovering it, which was practised also by Fr. Binans.|| Yea, to testify the great worthiness they apprehended to be contained therein, some great kings have denied it to be fitting that any mortal woman should bear that name.¶ Therefore Alphonsus VI., king of Castile, being to marry a wife that was a baptized Moor, would not have her called Mary, though she desired it. And Casimir I., king of Poland, changed his wife’s name, which was Mary, into Dobrogneva: whence the custom is thought to have risen, that in Poland it is a crime to name any woman Mary.**

* Id Marial. part. 12. ser. 2. p. 994.

† Stellarii, l. 6. p. 1. art. 2.

‡ Spinellus de Throno Dei, c. 4.

§ In vit. ejus apud Surium. Octob. 24.

|| Paul Barry paradis. ouvert. p. 265.

¶ Raynaud. Dipt. Mar. p. 28.

** P. Parry, ib.

But I will conclude these mysteries of her name, with one that Spinellus* mentions, consisting in numbers that may be made out of it. "That as the number of the beast is 666, and the number of the name of Jesus 888, so the number of Mary's name is 999." (How he makes this good he does not tell us, but) he infers from hence her dignity; for, says he, "the number 9 consists of the number 3 (which is a most perfect number agreeing to the Divine Persons) thrice repeated, and is attributed to the orders of angels; wherefore it shews, that the mother of God is wholly celestial and angelical; and then this number 9 being thrice repeated, shews that this her excellency and dignity is both eminent and solid."

Having thus found a great many fantastical mysteries in that where none was ever intended, the next work is to cry up this name, and make it as venerable as possible; not only by the ways now named, but by others which now shall follow. They endeavour to persuade us, that not only men, but angels admire this name, and are in love with its pronunciation.

Richardus de St. Laurentio† (a great author with them, who lived above four hundred years ago) makes this observation, "That at least three times this question is asked in the Canticles in the person of the angels, *Quæ est ista?* who is this? And he imagines the reason to be, that they are desirous that the sweet name of Mary may be answered to that question: for, says he, angels desire that her name should be mentioned and discovered; and that it should not only be renowned in heaven." And if this concern of theirs does not move us, yet gratitude to her, when she herself is also concerned in it, will not fail to do it. To which purpose they tell us, that her beloved Hermanus, whom she married,‡ being distracted and hindered by business, and the cares of his monastery, grew more negligent and remiss in reciting her offices and hours than formerly, to whom she appeared in the shape of an old withered wrinkled woman, chiding him that now her memory was grown old with him, whereas formerly he named, saluted, and praised her a thousand times. Upon this rebuke, he resolved, by commemorating her joys, and reciting her Aves, to make her young again; which he did. "The name of Mary," says another,§ "is the best image of her, and more venerable than all her relics and images.

* Ubi supra. † Lib. 1. de Daud. Virg. c. 2. citante Novarino.

‡ Barthol. de los Rios. Hierarch. Marian. l. v. c. 40. ex Surio vit. Hermanni Apr. 5. Gononi Chron. Deip. p. 242.

§ Barthol. de los Rios, ib. l. 6. c. 11. et 26.

He that doth invoke her by this sweet name, attending to the etymology thereof, does recite compendiously great litanies of extraordinary merit and efficacy.

Poza* and others think, that the name of Mary, as far as is expedient for our own and others salvation, does confer the effect *ex opere operato* (by the work done), just as the Church's exorcisms do; and as many say the same of the sign of the cross, and of the name of Jesus. From such principles as these, they fall into those heathenish battologies and vain repetitions, which our Saviour condemns, Matth. vii. 7; and their prayers become, in the phrase of the Son of Sirach,† “much babbling,” consisting of a nauseous repetition of one and the same name over and over again. Of this the reader may take a shameful instance, how they abuse in this manner the blessed name of Jesus, in that which they call Jesus Psalter,‡ which consist of fifteen petitions, with the name of Jesus ten times, (or rather thirty times) reiterated before every one of the petitions.

The manner of reciting the Psalter of Jesus is as follows :

First Petition.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| 1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | } Mercy. |
| 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 3. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 4. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 5. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 6. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 7. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 8. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 9. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 10. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |

Second Petition.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | } Help me. |
| 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 3. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 4. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 5. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 6. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 7. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 8. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 9. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |
| 10. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | |

* Elucidar. l. 2. trac. 17. c. 5.

† Eccclus. vii. 14.

‡ See Manual of Godly Prayers at the end.

Third Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Strengthen me.
- And so on as before.

Fourth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Comfort me.
- &c.

Fifth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Make me constant and stable.
- &c.

Sixth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Lighten me.
- &c.

Seventh Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Grant me grace to dread thee.
- &c.

Eighth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Grant me grace to love thee.
- &c.

Ninth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Give me grace to remember my death.
- &c.

Tenth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Send me here my purgatory.
- &c.

Eleventh Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Grant me grace to fly evil company.
- &c.

Twelfth Petition.

1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, }
 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, } Give me grace to call for help to thee.
- &c.

Thirteenth Petition.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | } | Make me to persevere in virtue. |
| 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | | |
| &c. | | |

Fourteenth Petition.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | } | Give me grace to fix my mind on thee. |
| 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | | |
| &c. | | |

Fifteenth Petition.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | } | Give me grace to order my life to thee. |
| 2. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | | |
| 3. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | | |
| 4. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu, | | |
| &c. as many times
as the first. | | |

Here you see an hundred and fifty rows of the name of Jesus, (which being three in a row, make up four hundred and fifty), which must be all pattered over, before those few words that make up the fifteen petitions are concluded. There is no Atheist or Infidel, who, if he had a design to turn prayers into ridicule, could more effectually do it, than by such a prescription as this. But we have not the worst of it yet, for you must know, that it is not the petition and the sense following this oft-repeated name, that is necessary, but the name alone oft used, without any thing else adjoined, is that which they lay much stress upon, and which makes acceptable devotion with them. For thus I find in that book of the Jesuit P. Barry,* which contains an hundred devotions to the blessed Virgin, and is bought up for common use, as our Practice of Piety, or the Whole Duty of Man, for I observe seventeen editions of it in less than thirty years, he gives this for one, "often to pronounce the name of Mary," in imitation of a Japan woman, concerning whom the annals of the Jesuits report, that in honour of a deity which that country worships, called Amida, she used to repeat that name an hundred and forty thousand times daily, rising very early every morning (as she had need to perform this task), and being assisted by a familiar spirit that awaked her. This woman was baptized, A.D. 1621, and after she was a Christian, changed this super-

* Le Paradise Ouvert. p. 166. The author of which is so fond of the Virgin's name, that instead of Paul Barry he desired to be called Paul of St. Mary.

stitution into devotion, and obliged herself, in gratitude for her conversion, to pronounce every day as many times (*viz.* a hundred and forty thousand) the sacred names of Jesus and Mary; and because now the devil would come no more to awake her in the morning, her angel guardian succeeded in that office; so pleasing to God, says the author, was her simplicity and devotion. This worship, so Japan and unparalleled, cannot, he says, be practised, the number is so great, unless God give some special grace. However he advises his Philagie (so he calls the devout person he instructs) to choose a good round number of Maries to repeat, as a way to get comfort, and to testify the tenderness of his affections to the mother of God. Another great stickler* for the advancement of her devotion, prescribes this exercise as very pleasing to her, *viz.* “the repeating only two words, Ave Maria (Hail Mary) seventy-two times, in memory of the seventy-two years of her life; to which if you adjoin as many honours and genuflections, the devotion will, he believes, be increased, and both soul and body be exercised in the service of the blessed Virgin. And last any one should scruple those reverences at the naming of her, which are usually paid at the mention of Jesus, a famed devotee† of the Virgin’s tells us, “that she made herself of no reputation, after the example of her Son, taking upon her the form of a handmaid; wherefore God also hath highly exalted her, and given her a name that is above every name, that in her name every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, &c.” Which very text thus applied (“in the name of Mary every knee shall bow,”) another Jesuit‡ thus comments upon: “After the sweet name of Jesus, there is no other name under heaven given unto men, whence such salvation and security comes to mankind.” He might have spared his compliment (“after the name of Jesus”) since he adds a little after,§ “in all temptations and infirmities of the soul, and in all necessities of the body, this holy name of Mary is our only remedy and refuge; neither was there ever any one in any such tribulation, that upon devout invocation of her, did not find present help.”

* Barthol. de los Rios, *ib.* l. 5. cap. 49.

† Rich. a St. Laurentio, l. 4. de Laud. Virg.

‡ Vincentius Brunus Medit. 2. de B. Virg. p. 62.

§ *Ib.* p. 64.

The sense of all which blasphemies is contained in the words of that hymn.

Gaude matrona* cœlica,	All joys attend thee, heav'nly dame,
Tu ancillam Jesu Christi	Tho' humbly thou didst choose the
Te vocare voluisti,	name
Sed ut docet lex divina	Of handmaid unto Christ; yet we,
Tu illius es domina :	Taught by the law divine, may see
Nam lex jubet et ratio	Thou art (unless we would degrade
Matrem præesse filio :	thee)
Ergo ora suppliciter	Rather his governess and lady :
Et præcipe sublimiter	Reason and law back one another,
Ut nos in mundi vespera	Before the son to set the mother.
Ad regna ducat superna.	Pray for us then, and if need be,
	Exert thy high authority,
	That when the world's joys set
	and leave us,
	His heavenly kingdom may receive
	us.

In honour of the name *Maria*, some have culled out five Psalms that begin with the letters of her name, and chosen it as an exercise daily to recite them. The Psalms are *Magnificat* (Luc. i.), *Ad Dominum* (Ps. cxix.), *Retribue* (Ps. cxviii.), *In Convertendo* (Ps. cxxv.), *Ad te Levavi* (Ps. cxxii.) This was practised, says Vincentius Bellovacensis,† by one Josecio, a monk of St. Omer's, and you may guess how acceptable this devotion was by the miracle that followed ; for as he lay dead in his chamber, they found five roses growing upon his face ; one coming out of his mouth, other two out of each nostril, and two more out of each ear, which in letters of gold had severally these five letters of her name, and those words of the Psalms written plainly upon them. Though the very same story is told by Thomas Cantipratanus,‡ concerning one Josbertus, of the monastery of Dole, and one, no doubt, as true as the other. But anything will do wonders, when the name of the blessed Virgin is glorified thereby ; for so we hear§ that a plague was immediately stopped in a convent, A.D. 1470, only by reciting five Psalms, taken, not out of the

* In Antidoto animæ et hist. sec. chorum Augustini in commemor. B. Virginis.

† Specul. Hist. lib. 8. cap. 116. [Venet. 1591.]

‡ De Mirac. sui temp. l. 2. c. 29. sec. 15.

§ Barthol. de los Rios, ubi supra, p. 628.

Bible, but out of Bonaventure's Psalter (as blasphemous as it is), which begin with the letters of her name, being these that follow : *Magna es Domina, Ad te Domina clamabo, Refugium tu es Domina, In Domina confido, Ad Dominam cum tribularer.*

There is no foolish lover that plays more childishly with the name of his mistress, than their ridiculous superstition does with the name of this their Lady, as they call her. They think their very charity is more acceptable when it honours her. For thus they advise,* and thus her slaves (Mancipia) at Brussels practise, to relieve five poor people on Saturday (which is dedicated to the Virgin) in memory of the five letters of her name : and to do it more effectually, such five poor people may be chosen to bestow the alms upon, who by the capital letters of their name do express and make up the name of blessed Maria, that so the remembrance of it may be the more lively. Nay, some in honour of it, deny nothing that is asked of them in the name of the Virgin ; being mindful (as the author wisely adds) of that saying, "whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Thus Alexander Ales† was trepanned to list himself in the order of the Franciscans, at that time famous for severity and poverty, being suddenly requested by one to enter into it for love of the mother of God, which, as irrefragable a doctor as he was, made him yield, although otherwise very unwilling, and loth at the first. The beggars in the country of the Great Mogul understand the efficacy of this ; who, we are told,‡ ask alms of Christians in the name of Bibee Maria (*i. e.* Lady Mary), not in the name of Hazanet (or Hazareth) Eesa (*i. e.* Lord Jesus), which shews that the Jesuits have preached to them Mary more than Christ. How can it choose but that her name must be very prevailing, when we read§ of a soldier, an old practitioner in the fornicating trade, who having hired of a poor man a night's lodging with his daughter, and was just preparing to deflower the virgin, who hung back and made lamentable moan ; when he asked her name, and understood that it was Mary, and remembered it was Saturday night (devoted to the Virgin), he desisted from his purpose, and placed her in a nunnery ; and immediately after being slain in a tournament, it was revealed by the blessed Virgin to this nun in a vision, that for the kindness he had shewed to her

* Id. ib. p. 629.

† Antoninus 3. part. Hist. tit. 24. c. 8.

‡ Purchas. Pilgrims. part. 1. l. 4. c. 17. p. 600.

§ Vincent. Bellov. spec. Hist. l. 7. c. 102, 103.

for her sake, she had brought his soul to heaven ; and as a sign of the truth of it, they should find a fresh rose upon his grave springing out of his mouth, which upon examination proved so. Not unlike to this is another encouraging story, which Pelbartus* gives us out of a book of miracles, which he attributes to St. Anselm : how a beggar came to a covetous rich man greatly devoted to the Virgin, and asked an alms of him for “ God’s sake,” and he denied him with reproaches ; he asked again of him, “ for the love of his own soul and his salvation,” but that argument moved him not at all : he begged a third time, “ for the love of the blessed Virgin ;” at which the covetous man angrily threw a loaf of bread to him, charging him to beg no more in that name. When the miser died, and his works became to be weighed, it was found that his good works were less, and so was adjudged to the devils to be tormented : but the blessed Virgin immediately appeared and brought a loaf of bread he had given for her sake, and put it in the balance, and immediately by her merits the scale was turned. She entreated her son for him, who said, “ I was hungry and he gave me no meat,” &c. He shewed no mercy, therefore deserves to find none ; to whom she replied, “ I am the Mother of Mercy, and he had me in great devotion :” and so he was released, and sent into the body again to repent and lead a better life. Such stories as these have given such spirit to the worshippers of the Virgin, that they are not afraid to dispute and put to the question, “ whether the name of Mary be not more powerful than that of Jesus.” That it is a sweeter name is a concluded case. For they compare† the two names of Jesus and Mary to salt and honey : “ Salt (which answers to Christ’s name) is more wholesome, and in respect to its preservative virtue, of itself more efficacious ; yet for all that it seems to be more sharp and pungent ; and so the name Jesus, howsoever you take it, sounds something of a judging majesty by reason of his divinity ; but now the name of Mary, *quantum quantum est*, is every way all sweetness ; it is honey, preserving from corruption, yet not biting ; and he concludes, that the name of Mary to us affords a sweeter taste than that of her Son.”

If you ask about the power and prevalency of the two names, we are told,‡ “ that it is not improbably said, that her

* Stellarii, l. 5. p. 2. art. 3.

† Barthol. de los Rios ubi supra, l. 6. c. 32.

‡ Id. ib. c. 38.

name, at least *quo ad nos*, is more efficacious than his: for which he cites the words of the spurious St. Anselm, *Velocior est nonnunquam salus, &c.** Salvation comes more speedily by invoking Mary's name than that of Jesus.—Christ being called upon in his own name, he does but what is just if he does not presently hear; but when his mother's name is invoked, though he that prays does not deserve to be heard for his own merits, yet the merits of his mother intercede that he should be heard." So that he concludes, that the name of Mary affords more gentle and humane, more frequent and speedy arguments of pity and mercy, than the name of her Son. Which another blasphemert† thus expresses, "Jesus is, as it were, a proud name (*quasi superbum nomen*), and too potent, but affection becomes her's that is a name more humble; so that if any one dreads the austerity of the Deity or male sex (*sexus virilis*) in Jesus, let him have recourse to Mary, in whom nothing of these is to be suspected; for Mary, is a woman's name, commending and carrying before it gentleness."

Francis Mendoza‡ the Jesuit, has spoke his mind out, in answer to the former question. "I say, though Christ stands in greater authority with God than the Virgin, yet the blessed Virgin sometimes is more easily moved by our prayers than Christ, and therefore the patronage of the Mother is sometimes more present to us, than that of the Son: the reason is, that Christ is a judge, and the blessed Virgin only a patroness, and a patroness is only mercy." And for further proof of this, he gives examples of this greater prevalency of the Virgin in several plagues at Rome and Constantinople, &c. Where after the invocation of saints, and of Christ himself without success, upon flying to this sacred anchor (as he calls her), upon carrying about her image, or celebrating her festival, the plague has immediately ceased; for as it is a common thing to break the force of cannon bullets by opposing woollsacks to them,§ so the anger of the Deity thundering and raging against miserable offenders, the force of it is broken and dulled by the interposition of Mary's fleece. "We read," says another,|| "Prov. xviii. 10, that the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous man runs unto it and is safe."

* De Excel. Virginis. c. 6.

† Rich. a S. Laurentio de Laud. Virg. l. 1. c. 2.

‡ Viridar. l. 2. probl. 2. p. 70.

§ Ib. p. 73.

|| Novarinus umbr. Virgin. num. 1195.

Turn but *nomen Domini* into *Dominæ* (a small matter, only the change of a letter) “the name of Lord into that of Lady, and you may say the same of Mary.” Nay, you may say more of her name, for though Solomon indeed (says the foresaid Richardus)* who knew but little of Mary, bids the righteous fly to the name of the Lord as to a strong tower; yet we (to whom blessed revelations have been made since his days) may say, “the name of our Lady is a strong tower, the sinner flies unto it and is safe.” It seems a just man may fly to God, if he pleases, but a sinner had better betake himself to Mary. And thus, says Novarinus,† some explain that in Luke xiii. concerning the tower of Siloam that fell and slew eighteen persons; “that tower is Christ, who was sent by the Father into the world, and broke in pieces all those on whom he fell: the Virgin Mary is our tower, but for safety, who withdraws and fetches off sinners (*subducit*) from the deserved anger of her Son.”

So that, according to this doctrine, though it be a common thing in exclamations (*Jesu Maria*) and in prayers (*Laus Deo et Virgini Mariæ*) to join the two names of Jesus and Mary, and to put Jesus first, just as Philip and Mary stand in our coins, yet this must be interpreted as done rather in civility to the relation of son and mother, than that sinners have an equal expectation from them, or encouragement in addresses to them, for in this Mary has the preference and precedency.

To conclude this, the Jesuit Poza‡ reckons up several admirable effects, that follow the use of the Virgin’s name; “that the name of Mary frees from the fear of death and injury or devils; that it makes the mind chaste; that it refreshes a soul that is fainting and sorrowful; that it gives security and safeguard to the body: and in a word, that her name receives all virtue from herself, and does the same thing that she does.

The words also of St. Bridget§ must not be forgotten; “upon the hearing Mary named, those that are in purgatory rejoice beyond measure, as a sick man lying in his bed, when he hears a word of comfort. The good angels hearing this name, presently approach nearer to those just men who are committed to their guardianship, and rejoice in their proficiency (as if, forsooth, they were more negligent in their office,

* Rich. a S. Laurent. ubi prius.

‡ Elucidar. l. 2. tr. 17. c. 6.

† Ibidem.

§ Revelat. l. 1. cap. 9.

till she was invoked). The devils also all of them dread and fear it; so that upon hearing the name of Mary, they presently let go and leave the soul that was detained in their clutches."

All that I shall further add is, that upon instigation of Lewis IX. king of France, Pope Clement IV.* bestowed a three years indulgence upon all that should repeat these following words, *viz. Benedictum sit dulce nomen Domini nostri Jesu Christi, et gloriosissimæ virginis Mariæ matris ejus, in æternum et ultra. Nos cum prole pia benedicat virgo Maria.* That is, Blessed be the sweet name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the most glorious Virgin Mary his mother for evermore.

Afford to us thy benediction,
O Virgin Mary with thy gracious Son.

The Name of Mary has its feast† also among the Conchenses in Spain, confirmed from the year 1513, by the Pope's brief; and though taken away for a time by Pope Pius V. yet it was restored by Pope Sixtus V.‡

* Raynaud. Dipt. Marian. p. 28.

† Idem. ib.

‡ [The following Encyclical Letter has just been issued by Pope Pius IX. from Gaeta, the place of his exile, in which he pronounces the Conception of the Virgin immaculate. One regrets that in circumstances of affliction so well calculated to make him consider, he has no more worthy subject of study.

“ Pius P.P., IX.

“ Venerabiles Fratres—Salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem.—Ubi primum, nullis certe Nostris meritis, sed arcano divinæ Providentiæ consilio, ad sublimem Principis Apostolorum Cathedram evecti, totius Ecclesiæ gubernacula tractanda suscepimus, summa quidem consolatione affecti fuimus, Venerabiles Fratres, cum noverimus quomodo in Pontificatu recolendæ memoriæ Gregorii XVI., Prædecessoris Nostri, ardentissimum in Catholico orbe mirifice revixerit desiderium, ut ab Apostolica Sede tandem aliquando solemni judicio decerneretur, Sanctissimam Dei Genitricem, omniumque nostrum amantissimam matrem, Immaculatam Virginem Mariam absque labe originali fuisse conceptam. Quod pientissimum desiderium clare aperteque testantur, atque demonstrant postulationes tum ad eundem Prædecessorem Nostrum, tum ad Nos ipsos continenter perlatae, quibus et clarissimi Antistites, et illustria Canonicorum Collegia, et Religiosæ Familiæ, inter quas inclytus Prædicatorum Ordo, certatim efflagitarunt, ut in Sacra Liturgia, ac præsertim in Præfatione Missæ de Beatissimæ Virginis Conceptione vocem illam *Immaculatam* palam publice enunciare et addere liceret. Quibus postulationibus ab eodem Prædecessore Nostro, atque a nobis ipsis quam libentissime fuit obsecundatum. Accedit etiam, Venerabiles Fratres, ut quamplurimi e vestro ordine suas litteras ad ipsum Decessorem Nostrum, et ad Nos dare non destiterint,

per quas iteratis petitionibus, atque ingeminatis studiis expostularunt, ut veluti Catholicæ Ecclesiæ doctrinam definire vellemus, Beatissimæ Virginis Mariæ Conceptum Immaculatum omnino fuisse, atque ab omni prorsus originalis culpæ labe immunem. Neque vero hac nostra etiam ætate defuere viri ingenio, virtute, pietate, doctrina præstantes, qui doctis ac laboriosis eorum scriptis hujusmodi argumentum, pientissimamque sententiam ita illustrarunt, ut non pauci mirentur, quod nondum ab Ecclesia, et Apostolica Sede hic Sanctissimæ Virgini decernatur honor, quem communis fidelium pietas Virgini ipsi, ex solemnī ejusdem Ecclesiæ et Sedis iudicio, atque auctoritate tribui, tantopere exoptat. Equidem hujusmodi vota pergrata perque jucunda Nobis fuere, qui vel a teneris annis nihil potius, nihil antiquius habuimus, quam singulari pietate, et obsequio, atque intimo cordis affectu Beatissimam Virginem Mariam colere, et ea peragere, quæ ad majorem ipsius Virginis gloriam, et laudem procurandam, cultumque promovendum conducere posse videantur. Itaque vel ab ipso supremi Nostri Pontificatus exordio summa quidem alacritate in tanti momenti negotium curas cogitationesque Nostras serio convertimus, atque humiles fervidasque Deo Optimo Maximo preces adhibere haud omisimus, ut cœlestis suæ gratiæ lumine mentem Nostram collustrare velit, quo cognoscere possimus quid in hac re a Nobis sit peragendum. Etenim ea potissimum spe nitimur fore, ut Beatissima Virgo quæ *meritorum verticem supra omnes Angelorum choros usque ad solium Deitatis erexit*,* atque antiqui serpentis caput virtutis pede contrivit, quæque *inter Christum et Ecclesiam constituta*,† ac tota suavis et plena gratiarum christianum populum a maximis quibusque calamitatibus, omniumque hostium insidiis et impetu, semper eripuit, atque ab interitu vindicavit, tristissimas quoque ac luctuosissimas nostras vicissitudines, acerbissimasque angustias, labores, necessitates amplissimo, quo solet, materni sui animi miserans affectu, velit præsentissimo, æque ac potentissimo suo apud Deum patrocínio, et divinæ iracundiæ flagella, quibus propter peccata nostra affligimur, avertere, et turbulentissimas malorum procellas, quibus cum incredibili animi Nostri dolore ubique jactatur Ecclesia, compescere, dissipare, et luctum Nostrum convertere in gaudium. Optime enim nostis, Venerabiles Fratres, omnem fiduciæ Nostræ rationem in Sanctissima Virgine esse collocatam; quandoquidem Deus *totius boni plenitudinem posuit in Maria; ut proinde si quid spei in nobis est, si quid gratiæ, si quid salutis, ab Ea noverimus redundare quia sic est voluntas Ejus, Qui totum nos habere voluit per Mariam*.‡

“ Hinc aliquos ecclesiasticos viros pietate spectatos, ac theologicis disciplinis apprimè excultos, et nonnullos Venerabiles Fratres Nostros Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ Cardinales virtute, religione, consilio, prudentia, ac rerum divinarum scientia illustres elegimus, eisque commisimus, ut pro eorum prudentia atque doctrina gravissimum argumentum omni ex parte accuratissime examinandum curarent, ac subinde eorum sententiam ad Nos diligentissime deferrent. Dum autem ita se res habent, illustria Decessorum Nostrorum vestigia sectari, exempla æmulari censuimus.

* S. Gregor. Pap. Exposit. in libros Regum. [i. § 5. Ed. Ben.]

† S. Bernard. Serm. in cap. XII. Apocalyps. [Dom. inf. Oct. Assumpt. § 5. Ed. Ben.]

‡ S. Bernard. in Nativit. S. Mariæ de Aquæductu. [§ 6. Ed. Ben.]

“*Quamobrem has Vobis, Venerabiles Fratres, scribimus Litteras, quibus egregiam vestram pietatem, atque episcopalem sollicitudinem magnopere excitamus, Vobisque etiam atque etiam inculcamus, ut quisque vestrum pro suo arbitrio, atque prudentia in propria Diœcesi publicas preces indicendas, ac peragendas curet, quo clementissimus luminum Pater Nos superna divini sui Spiritus luce perfundere, numine afflare dignetur, ut in tanti momenti re illud consilium suscipere valeamus, quod ad majorem, tum sancti sui Nominis gloriam, tum Beatissimæ Virginis laudem, tum militantis Ecclesiæ utilitatem, possit pertinere. Optamus autem vehementer, ut majore, qua fieri potest, celeritate Nobis significare velitis qua devotione vester Clerus, Populusque fidelis erga Immaculatæ Virginis Conceptionem sit animatus, et quo desiderio flagret, ut ejusmodi res ab Apostolica Sede decernatur, atque in primis noscere vel maxime cupimus quid Vos ipsi, Venerabiles Fratres, pro eximia vestra sapientia de re ipsa sentiatís quidque exoptetis. Et quoniam Romano Clero jam concessimus, ut peculiare canonicas horas de Beatissimæ Virginis Conceptione recentissime compositas, ac typis editas, recitare valeat loco earum, quæ in communi Breviario continentur, idcirco hisce Litteris facultatem Vobis tribuimus, Venerabiles Fratres, ut, si ita placuerit, universus vestræ Diœceseos Clerus easdem de Sanctissimæ Virginis Conceptione canonicas horas, quibus nunc Romanus utitur Clerus, persolvere libere et licite possit, quin ejusmodi veniam a Nobis, vel a Nostra Sacrorum Rituum Congregatione implorare debeatis.*

“*Plane non dubitamus, Venerabiles Fratres, quin pro singulari vestra in Sanctissimam Virginem Mariam pietate, hisce Nostris desideriis omnia cura et studio quam libentissime obsequi gaudeatis, atque opportuna responsa, quæ a Vobis exposcimus, Nobis dare properetis. Interim vero cœlestium omnium munerum auspicem, et præcipuæ Nostræ in Vos benevolentiae testem accipite Apostolicam Benedictionem, quam ex imo corde profectam Vobis ipsis, Venerabiles Fratres, cunctisque Clericis, Laicisque fidelibus, vigilantiae vestræ commissis amantissime impertimur.*

“*Datum Cajetæ die 2 Februarii Anno 1849 Pontificatus Nostri Anno Tertio.*”

“*TO THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, AND BISHOPS OF
THE WHOLE CATHOLIC WORLD.*

PIUS PP. IX.

“*Venerable Brethren—Health and Apostolical Benediction. From the first day, when raised without any merit of our own, but by a secret purpose of Divine Providence, to the supreme chair of the Prince of the Apostles, we took in hand the rudder of the whole Church, we were touched with a sovereign consolation, Venerable Brethren, when we knew in how marvellous a manner, under the Pontificate of our predecessor Gregory XVI. of venerable memory, there was awakened throughout the whole Catholic world the ardent desire of seeing it at length decreed by a solemn judgment of the Holy See, that the Most Holy Mother of God, who is also the tender Mother of us all, the Immaculate Virgin Mary, was conceived without original sin.*

“*This most pious desire is clearly and manifestly attested and demonstrated by the incessant petitions presented as well to our predecessor as*

to ourselves, wherein the most illustrious prelates, the most venerable canonical chapters, and the religious congregations, especially the illustrious Order of Preaching Friars, have rivalled each other in soliciting that permission should be granted to add and pronounce aloud and publicly in the sacred liturgy, and also in the Preface of the Mass of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, the word *Immaculate*. To these instances, our predecessor and we ourselves acceded with the utmost readiness. It has further come to pass, Venerable Brethren, that a great number among you have not ceased addressing to our predecessor and to us, letters wherein expressing their redoubled wishes and their lively solicitations, they press us to resolve to define it as a doctrine of the Catholic Church that the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary was entirely immaculate, and absolutely exempt from all stain of original sin.

“Moreover, there have not been wanting in our time men eminent for their genius, virtue, piety and learning, who in their learned and laborious writings have cast so brilliant a light upon this subject and most pious opinion, that multitudes of persons are astonished that the Church and the Apostolic See have not yet decreed to the Most Holy Virgin this honour which the common piety of the Faithful so ardently desires to see attributed to her by a solemn judgment and by the authority of the same Church and the same See. Assuredly, these wishes have been singularly pleasing and full of consolation to us, who, from our most tender years, have held nothing more dear, nothing more precious than to honour the Blessed Virgin with a particular piety, with a special veneration, and with the most intimate devotion of our heart, and to do all that seemed to us apt to contribute to her great glory and praise, and to the extension of her worship.

“Thus, from the commencement of our Pontificate, we have directed with an extreme interest our most serious cares and thoughts towards an object of such high importance, and have not ceased to raise unto Almighty God humble and fervent prayers that He may deign to illuminate our soul with the light of His heavenly grace, and make us know the determination which we ought to make upon this subject. We also repose all confidence in this, that the Blessed Virgin, who has been raised “by the greatness of her merits above all the choirs of angels up to the throne of God,” who has crushed, under the foot of her virtues, the head of the old serpent, and who, “placed between Christ and the Church,” full of graces and sweetness, has ever rescued the Christian people from the greatest calamities, from the snares and from the attacks of all their enemies, and has saved them from ruin, will in like manner deign, taking pity on us with that immense tenderness which is the habitual outpouring of her maternal heart, to drive away from us by her instant and all-powerful protection before God, the sad and lamentable misfortunes, the cruel anguish, the pains and necessities which we suffer, to turn aside the scourges of Divine wrath which afflict us by reason of our sins, to appease and dissipate the frightful storms of evil with which the Church is assailed on all sides, to the unmeasured grief of our souls, and, in fine, to change our sorrow into joy.

“For you know perfectly, Venerable Brethren, that the foundation of our confidence is in the Most Holy Virgin; since it is in her that God has placed *the plenitude of all good in such sort that if there be in us any*

hope, if there be any spiritual health, we know that it is from her that we receive it, . . . because such is the will of Him who hath willed that we should have all by the instrumentality of Mary.

“We have consequently chosen some Ecclesiastics, distinguished by their piety, and well versed in theological studies, and at the same time a certain number of our Venerable Brethren the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, illustrious for their virtue, their religion, their wisdom, their prudence, and for their knowledge of Divine things; and we have commissioned them carefully to examine this grave subject in all its relations, according to their prudence and their learning, and thereafter as soon as possible to lay before us their resolution. Herein we have thought fit to follow the illustrious footsteps of our predecessors, and to imitate their example.

“For this reason it is, Venerable Brethren, that we address to you these letters, whereby we earnestly excite your distinguished piety and your episcopal solicitude, and we exhort you, each according to his prudence and his judgment, to ordain and to cause to be recited, each of you in his own diocese, public prayers to obtain of the merciful Father of Light, that He may deign to illuminate us with the superior brightness of His Divine Spirit, and may inspire us with a breath from on high, and that in an affair of such great importance, we may be able to take such a resolution as shall most contribute, as well to the glory of His Holy Name as to the praise of the Blessed Virgin and the profit of the Church Militant. We have a lively wish that you should as soon as possible make known to Us with what devotion your Clergy and Faithful people are animated towards the Conception of the Immaculate Virgin, and what desire they have to behold the Apostolic See promulgate a decree in this matter. We, above all, desire to know, Venerable Brethren, what are in this respect the wishes and feelings of your eminent wisdom.

“And as we have already permitted to the Roman Clergy to recite a certain Office of the Conception of the Most Holy Virgin, composed and printed very recently, in place of the Office which is found in the ordinary Breviary, we also accord to you, Venerable Brothers, the faculty of permitting all the Clergy of your Dioceses, if you judge it convenient, to recite freely and lawfully the same Office of the Conception of the Most Holy Virgin, which is actually used by the Roman Clergy, without your demanding this permission of us, or of our Sacred Congregation of Rites.

“We make no doubt, Venerable Brothers, but that your singular piety towards the Most Blessed Virgin will make you, with the utmost diligence and the most lively interest, comply with the desires we express to you, and that you will hasten to transmit to us within a convenient time the answers which we require of you. Meanwhile, receive as a pledge of all celestial favours, and above all as a witness of our good-will towards you, the Apostolic Benediction which we give from the bottom of our heart to you, Venerable Brethren, as well as to all the Clergy and all the faithful laity entrusted to your vigilance.

“Given at Gaëta, on the 2nd day of February, in the year 1849, in the third year of our Pontificate.”]

ARTS AND PRACTICES
OF
MISSIONARIES AND PAPISTS,
DISCOVERED, AND LAID OPEN.

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- I.—THE MISSIONARIES' ARTS DISCOVERED.
- II.—OF THE INCURABLE SCEPTICISM OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.
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THE
MISSIONARIES' ARTS DISCOVERED:

OR

AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR WAYS OF INSINUATION, THEIR
ARTIFICES, AND SEVERAL METHODS OF WHICH THEY
SERVE THEMSELVES IN MAKING CONVERTS :

WITH

A LETTER TO MR. PULTON, CHALLENGING HIM TO MAKE GOOD
HIS CHARGE OF DISLOYALTY AGAINST PROTESTANTS :

AND

AN HISTORICAL PREFACE,

*Containing an Account of their introducing the Heathen Gods in their
Processions, and other particulars relating to the several Chapters of
this Treatise.*

*To the Reverend Mr. Pulton, Jesuit and Schoolmaster
in the Savoy.*

REVEREND SIR,

THOUGH the author of the Answer to Dr. Pierce's Sermon* had the hardiness to affirm, that it is evident more rebellions have been raised against princes for religion only, in this last reformed age, in a few Protestant countries, than have been raised by Catholics for any cause whatsoever, in seven ages before throughout all Christendom; wherein he is seconded by another, who with the same modesty tells the world,† that in

* The Primit. Rule before the Reformat. Par. 2. p. 23. An. 1663. 4to.

† See Vindic. of the Sincer. of the Prot. Rel. p. 116. Lond. 1679. 4to.

this last century, there have been more princes deposed and murdered for their religion by Protestants, than have been in all the others since Christ's time by the attempts and means of Roman Catholics : yet these gentlemen were so politic as to avoid the infamy which a confutation would subject them to, by concealing themselves from the world : but what either a sense of their inability, or a consciousness of their immodesty hindered them from prosecuting, you have very freely engaged yourself to perform ; by renewing their assertion, and advising your learned adversary not to meddle with the subject of the disloyalty of your party, lest you return the charge upon the Reformed Churches.*

But, Sir, we are not to be frightened with blustering words ; nor will your informing us that you† have many remarks in store to shew that whatever Catholics have judged in the theory about the deposing power, it was the Reformers who reduced it to practice, and that you will produce them if farther provoked, terrify us any more than your several volumes of collections out of the Fathers, which you boast of ; we know, Sir, your assertion is untrue, and therefore are not afraid to bring it to the test.

I do therefore here challenge you, as you would not appear a slanderer, and guilty of venting a most pernicious and notorious falsehood, as you value the honour of your Church, and your own reputation, to publish those remarks you say you have made ; and vindicate yourself, or else acknowledge that you have printed and published an assertion, without regard either to truth or modesty.

I must confess, in any other case I should be apt to censure myself for the freedom of this address, but it is certainly time to speak, when a man pretending to be a priest of the living and true God, shall in defence of his religion (which if true needs no such abominable arts to uphold it) vent so bold a slander, tending to expose the pure Churches of Christ, as enemies to their sovereigns, and so render them odious to those from whom they have all imaginable reason to expect protection, as from nursing fathers.

I will not tie you up to your own assertion, that the Reformers have deposed and endeavoured to depose more princes

* Mr. Pulton's Acc. p. 18. [Lond. 1687.]

† Mr. Pulton's Remarks, p. 31, 32. [Lond. 1687.]

in the space of one hundred and fifty years,* than the Roman Catholics had done in sixteen hundred; for you will be more puzzled to find a Papist in the first centuries of that period,† than you were to tell under what Pope the fourth Council of Lateran was assembled.

Nor do I desire the inquiry should be confined to the term of the last seven hundred years on the Romish side,‡ which the above-cited author pitched upon; but will freely remit you above five hundred of that, and *in the time since the Reformation do engage myself to prove what I have asserted p. 76 of this treatise.*

I do not much expect an answer to this challenge,§ for those men who could lie near twenty years under such a charge as Dr. Du Moulin laid against them, and dared them to call him to an account for, “the murder of King Charles I., without ever venturing to clear themselves, may easily bear this; besides your champions have of late left their doctrines to defend themselves.”

However I once again renew the challenge, which, if you accept, it will soon be seen that you are not alone guilty of such insincere and immodest dealing, since the Vindicator of Mr. de Meaux|| hath told the world, that not only the protestations but the practices of the Romanists have justified them in the point of obedience to princes.

A little time will shew who is in the right; for having your remarks ready, I suppose we need not expect long, if you have any design to justify yourself, and think you are able; but if not, do but own your rashness and error, which in duty you are bound to do, that the Church of God may have some reparation for so bold a calumny; and notwithstanding this freedom, you shall find me on all occasions,

Reverend Sir, your most obedient servant,

As far as love to truth will permit,

ANONYMUS.

* Mr. Pulton's Acc. p. 18.

† Dr. T.'s Acc. of the Conference, p. 16.

‡ Prim. Rule before the Ref. par. 2. p. 23. [Antw. 1663.]

§ Vind. of the Sincer. of the Prot. Relig. p. 61, &c. Lond. 1679. 4to. I have defied them now seventeen years to call me in question before our Judges, and so I do still.

|| Reply to the Def. of the Exposit. of the Ch. of Eng. Pref. p. 12. [Lond. 1687.]

THE PREFACE.

THE design of the ensuing discourse is laid down in the Introduction ; so that the business of this Preface is chiefly to supply some particulars which either are omitted, or could not conveniently be inserted in the book itself.

§. 1. The device of bewitching men's senses with pomp and show, I have both mentioned and exposed, yet it is looked upon so considerable in that corrupt Church, that it is not only defended by Cardinal Pallavicini, and thrust into the number of the notes whereby they pretend to distinguish their Church from all others, and prove that it is the only true one, but so much stress is laid upon it, that it seems one of the main pillars of the Roman fabric ; which, if we may believe one of the learnedest divines of France, could not subsist without it. "The world," saith he, "could not bear a religion calculated only for philosophers ; the people did not know what it was to think, and to govern themselves by the impressions that abstracted thoughts* made on their minds ; they must have outward things to strike upon their senses and imaginations, to amuse, to terrify, and to excite them : so legends, dreadful stories, and a pompous worship were necessary to make the impressions of religion go deep into such coarse souls : from whence he concluded that the Reformation had reduced the Christian religion to such severe terms that it was only a religion for philosophers." Thus these gentlemen contradict themselves, one while pretending that our religion is founded upon such loose principles† as require no strictness nor mortification of its professors ; at another time advancing a charge which would sound well in the mouths of any but such as bend their whole endeavours to find a way for men to go to heaven and keep their sins too, and who blame the Reformed Churches for nothing more than their calculating their doctrines in opposition to the laziness and lusts of men, as their great Master, whose steps they follow, did before them.

The precepts of Christianity are so severe in themselves, that the founders of the Papal greatness could not find their interest in too strictly pressing the observation of them ; the ambitious, the covetous, and the luxurious man can see nothing there to gratify his predominant desire ; and seeing such a grandeur as

* Three Letters concerning the present state of Italy, p. 83. [1688.]

† See chap. 5.

that of the Papacy could not be upheld by those melancholy virtues of humility, contempt of the world, meekness, and mortification, there must be some method found to dispense with them. The first step in the prosecution of this design was, "to draw men insensibly from the contemplation of the more spiritual part of religion to external pomp, which by charming the senses might keep them so fixed as to afford no leisure for inward reflections; while the spirits being dilated and the affections raised by the impressions they make on the beholders of them, those superficial emotions are highly extolled for divine transports, and the operations of the Holy Spirit."

They knew well that nothing renders any thing more odious to the vulgar than to represent it in a ridiculous manner; and therefore instead of the more rational way of convincing men's understandings, they have taken up the method of jeering men out of their opinions; though the shame sometimes (as it ought always to do among thinking men) returns upon themselves; as it did* when they attempted to ridicule the Jansenists in a procession at Mascon, in the year 1651.

I have noted the concession of Baronius, that the heathen rites and ceremonies were purposely introduced among the Romanists in their service of God; and I thought that pretty difficult to do without violating the very first principles of Christianity; but the Jesuits of Luxembourg† have found a way to consecrate not only Pagan rites, but their gods too, to the service of the blessed Virgin, which they pretend is the service of God.

The relation is of such a nature, and so scarce even in French, that I am sure the reader will not be displeased to see what a profane puppet-show they make of religion, and to what extravagances their humour of gorgeous shows carries them.

"There were several pageants carried through the town,‡

* See Avis a RR. PP. Jesuits, sur leur procession de Luxembourg, du 20 May, 1685. p. 2. 12s.

† And not only they, but the Jesuits of Aix in Provence have done the same, and there is nothing more usual among those of Goa in the East Indies. See Avis aux RR. PP. Jesuits des Aix en Provence, *Col.* 1687. 12s; and De la Valle's Travels, p. 203, 208. *Lond.* 1665. fol.

‡ Avis a RR. PP. Jesu. p. 5. Pendant que la procession marchera, elle rencontrera dans la ville divers Theatres, dont les spectacles differens serviront à inspirer agreeablement la pieté envers Nôtre Dame de Consolation. Mars commande à ses Guerriers, et à Vulcaine, Bronte, Sterope, Pyracmon, et autres anciens bombardiers de prendre garde de ne plus faire aucune insulte à la Chapelle de N. Dame de Consolation.—Mot pour le Dieu Mars, Procul ô, procul este profani. [*Col.* 1687.]

which they tell us were designed to inspire agreeable sentiments of piety towards our Lady of Consolation; in one of them sat Mars, the god of war, who commanded his soliers not to do any mischief to the chapel of our Lady of Consolation; and the word for this god was, *Procul, O procul este profani*. As if any thing could be more profane than this heathen deity in a Christian procession! no doubt the people were wonderfully excited to piety by this object introduced into one of the most solemn acts of their religion.

* “Then came Ceres, Flora, Pomona, the Naiades, the Nymphs of the field and of the groves, rejoicing for the return of our Lady of Consolation (whose image they were conducting to her chapel); and the word for these rustic divinities was,—*Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna*.

† Then four nymphs, Fame, Religion, Truth, and Glory, the first of which affirmed that Lewis the Great was as illustrious for his piety towards the holy Virgin as for his many victories; and the word for them all was, *Cedant arma sacris*. Religion was certainly very much advanced in the esteem of the beholders, who saw her put in the same rank with Fame and Glory.

“After them came Joy,‡ Fortitude, Plenty, and Health, the ordinary effects of our Lady of Consolation, at the head of the towns of that province, persuading them to put themselves under the protection of the Virgin; who§ appeared in triumph, with Peace, Plenty, and Learning on one side, on the other Mars and Bellona in chains; who discovered by their looks

* Ibid. p. 6. Cerés, Flore, Pomone, les Naiades, les Nymphs des prairies et des bois, se rejouissent du retour de Nôtre Dame de Consolation, a la campagne.—Mot des Nymphs et dez Divinitez rustiques.—*Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna*.

† Ibid. p. 7. La Renommée accompagnée de la Religion, de la Verité, et de la Gloire, publie au monde que Louïs le Grande n'est pas moin illustre par la solide piete envers la Sainte Vierge, que par l'éclat de ses victoires.—Mot pour des quatre Nymphes, *Cedant arma sacris*.

‡ Ibid. p. 8. La Joye, la Force, la Abondance, et la Santé, effets ordinaires de N. Dame de Consolation, marchent à la teste des villes du Luxembourg, pour marquer que ces agreeables Nymphes ont persuadé à toute la Province de se mettre sous la protection de la Sainte Vierge.

§ La Province du Luxembourg fait voir sur son char la Sainté Vierge triomphante, et montre d'un côté la paix, l'abondance, et les beaux arts: et de l'autre Mars, et Bellone dans les chaines. On comprend assez de son geste et de sa contenance qu'elle attribué l'éloignement de ses maux et le retour de son bonheur à la protection de sa chere patrone. p. 9.

that the deliverance of that country from war was only to be attributed to their patron the blessed Virgin. Which was farther expressed in these following verses:—

* Mars says the word, the sword
devours no more :
Our laurels are no longer dy'd
with gore.
Peace, which we long desired
and wished in vain,
Learning and plenty are return'd
again ;
To Mary's bounty we these bles-
sings owe,
Who freely doth this sweet re-
pose bestow.

* Ibid.

Si Mars arrestes es Guerriers,
Si le sang repandu ne tient
plus des Lauriers,
Et si la Paix long temps
bannie,
Et l'abondance et les beaux
arts,
Rentrent dans nos heureux
ramparts,
Cest l'effet du repos que nous
donne Marie.

And the three† genii, of the Church, of France, and of Lux-
embourg are made to speak thus :—

By an irrevocable law we three
To celebrate great Mary's praise
agree,
Our keys¹ and lilies² we to her
submit,
Our lions³ humbly couch be-
neath her feet.
The heavenly powers bless this
accord of heart,
In which the earth seemeth to
bear a part.

¹ The arms of the Church.

² The arms of France.

³ The arms of Luxembourg.

Par d'immuables loix,
Nous conspirons tous trois,
A celebrer les grandeurs de
Marie,
Nos clefs, nos lyons, et nos
lis,
Luy sont parfaitement sou-
mis.
Le ciel benit cette belle har-
monie
Qui tient nos cœurs si bien
unis,
Et la terre en parôit ravie.

“ From the praise of the Virgin they pass to another subject ;
but still designing to raise de-
votion in the spectators, where
they bring in ‡ Lewis XIII.
dedicating himself and kingdom
to our Lady ; for which they
extol him in these lines :—

‡ Ibid. p. 15. Louis XIII. de
glorieuse memoire accompagnede
sa Cour, qui offre sa personne, et
son Royaume, à la Sainte Vierge,
—Inscription pour Louis le Juste.

† Ibid. p. 12. Inscription pour les trois Genies, de l'Eglise, de la France,
et du Luxembourg.

Lewis whose virtues Fame re-	Juste en la paix, juste en la
sounds afar,	guerre,
Lewis the just in peace, the just	Louïs repandit par la
in war,	terre
Was ne'er so just as in one	Un nom que la justice orna
glorious deed,	de ces appas.
By which he did even himself	Mais ce monarque auguste
exceed,	Jamais ne fut plus juste.
And hath a rule to other princes	Que quand trazant la regle
given :	aux autres potentats,
Offering his kingdom to the	A la Reine du Ciel il offrit
Queen of Heaven.	ces estats.

“And thus having introduced false gods to honour the Virgin, in the next place they endeavour the same by false assertions : for Victory and the Virtues,* carrying palms and crowned with laurels, expose upon seven tablets the great actions of the present French king, which he performed for the honour of the Virgin.

“But because the world would not easily believe that the ensuing particulars were undertaken with that design, they pretend a revelation of it, which, like the old heathen oracles, is delivered in verse.

An Inscription for Lewis the Great.

While the world his mighty
actions sees,
It wonders at th' amazing pro-
digies
Before unheard of; but the
true design
It cannot find because it can't
divine :
That lay unknown to all, from
all concealed,
Till Heaven applauding it, the
cause revealed ;

Inscription pour Louis le Grand.

Pendant que la terre étonnée
De cent prodiges inouis
Que fait l'admirable Louïs,
Ne comprend pas le but de
cette destinée,
Le ciel applaudissant à ses
faits glorieux
Nous dit que ce grand Roy
s'acquerant la victoire,
Travaille bien moins pour sa
gloire
Que pour l'honneur de la reine
des cieux.

* Ibid. p. 16. La Victoire et les Vertus chargées de palmes et couronnées de lauriers, qui representent en plusieurs tableaux les grandes actions de nostre invincible monarque faites pour l'honneur et la service de la Sainte Vierge.

He sought not glory for himself alone,
 But he preferr'd the Virgin's to his own,
 To honour her more than himself he sought,
 And won his victories her glory to promote.

"Then descending to particulars,* the first tablet tells us of churches built and dedicated to the blessed Virgin.

"The† second sets forth the taking of so many towns in Holland, and re-establishing the worship of the Virgin in their churches.

"The‡ third informs us that the enemies of the Virgin are driven from Port Royal and out of France.

"In the§ fourth they tell us that the Algerines were punished by the French bombs for being enemies to Mary.

"The|| fifth brags of the extinction of the heretics in France, enemies of the mother of God.

"The¶ sixth and seventh are much to the same purpose, importing that the French king hath put an end to the war, which was so dishonourable to our Lady, so that now they can go on pilgrimage and pay their devotions to her."

These tablets are composed of so many false and ridiculous materials, that I cannot forbear inserting some reflections which one of the Roman communion hath made upon them, who** wonders that they should pretend the war of Holland was on a religious account, but is very much scandalized at their telling

* Ibid. p. 17. Tableau 1. Eglises dédiées à Nostre Dame, baties, réparées et ornées.

† Ibid. Prise de la Hollande et retablissement du culte de la Vierge dans les temples reconciliez.

‡ Ibid. p. 18. Adversaires du culte de la mere de Dieu chassez de Port Royal, et de la France.

§ Ibid. p. 19. Mahometans ennemis de Jesus Christ, et de Marie punis de Alger.

|| Ibid. p. 20. Defaite de l'heresie des ennemis de la mere de Dieu.

¶ P. 21. 22. Le roy met fin à la guerre contraire aux honneur de nostre Dame de Consolation.—Paix redonnée à l'Europe qui va retablir la sureté à la campagne ensuite les Pelerinages, et les autres devoirs de pieté que l'on a coustumé de rendre à nostre Dame de Consolation.

** P. 17. Il ne paroît par aucun act public que la guerre contre les Hollandois ait esté pour cause de religion : et de plus pour quoy pretendre que le but du roy, dans la reconciliation de quelques temples en Hollande, ait esté le culte de la Vierge plustot que l'adoration du S. Sacrament. et le

the world that the reconciliation of the Churches was in honour of the Virgin, while they take no notice of the greater parts of their worship then restored ; “ which passage he freely acknowledges would incline one to believe that they place all religion in the adoration they pay to her.”

He positively* affirms that the second tablet is absolutely false, and laughs† at the inscription of the third ; for if the design against Algiers had been to punish them for their enmity to our Lady, they would certainly have been obliged by the articles of peace to render her more honour for the future.

He‡ charges them with misrepresenting those they call heretics in the fifth inscription, who he says are no enemies to the blessed Virgin, and that in the sixth§ they have represented that great prince (whom they designed to flatter) as an enemy to the Queen of Heaven, while they tell us that the war of Luxembourg was dishonourable to her, when all the world knows the city was besieged and taken by that monarch.

And indeed the whole procession throughout was such a piece of heathenish pomp, that the same author, though a *Romanist*,|| complains of it as unworthy the gravity of the Christian religion, and which is sufficient to make the worship of the blessed Virgin be looked upon as superstitious and pro-

rétablissement en general de la religion Catholique. N'est ce pas donner lieux aux heretiques de croire qu'on met toute la religion dans le culte de la Vierge, ce qui ne leur peut etre qu'un grand sujet de scandale ?

* P. 18. Car c'en est une horrible adire.—Il est faux, etc.

† P. 19. Or y eut il jamais une plus grand chimere que de vouloir qu'il ait fait bombarder Alger, pour punir les Mahometans de ce qu'ils sont ennemis de Jesus et de Marie. Il faudroit donc qu'il eut mis pour condition dans la paix qu'il à faite depuis avec eux, qu' à l'avenir ils porteroient plus d'honneur à la Sainte Vierge.

‡ P. 20. Nous nous plaignons avec raison de ce que les heretiques, pour nous rendre odieux, nous imputent beaucoup de choses que nous avons toujours soustenu n'estre point les sentiment de l'Eglise Catholique. Nous devons donc garder le mesme equite envers eux. Or ils toujours protestent qu'ils n' estoient point ennemis de la Vierge.

§ P. 21. Or n'est ce pas Louïs le Grand qui à assiegé cette place ? vous ne le representez donc point comme fort devot à la Sainte Vierge, puis qu'un disant d'une part qu'il à mis fin à la guerre contraire aux honneurs de nostre Dame de Consolation, nous faites entendre de l'autre qu'il à fait une guerre contraire aux honneurs de Nostre Dame de Consolation.

|| P. 3. Ces manieres theatrales d'honorer la mere de Dieu, sont si indignes de la gravité de la religion Chrestienne, et qui ne peuvent que donner sujet aux ennemis de l'Eglise de decrier la devotion que les fideles ont à la Sainte Vierge, et de la faire passer pour un culte superstitieux et profane.

fane;* “for,” saith he, “can any one believe that it was possible for so many persons of all sorts as were spectators out of curiosity, and little enough acquainted with spiritual things, to have any serious reflections upon the great mysteries of religion, in the midst of so many vain shows which continually distract the mind, and insensibly lead it to other subjects.”

These considerations are so weighty with that reverend prelate,† the Archbishop of Mechlin, that he hath prohibited not only such profane spectacles in their processions, but even the carrying the images of their saints, at the same time with the sacrament, which is found by experience prejudicial to devotion, the generality of the people being so busied in observing the curious images and their rich ornaments, that they have no leisure for serious devotion. “And this perhaps is one of the reasons why that bishop is said to be a Jansenist, and but little esteemed among them.”

Neither is it altogether to be passed over, that these Jesuits could not be content to expose those Pagan deities under the names of gods and divinities to the eyes of the spectators, but they have also‡ published an account of the procession, which because I could not procure, I have given but an imperfect relation from the Adviser; but which I think is sufficient to the end for which I have inserted it, and I appeal to all the world whether it be possible for such a representation, wherein§

* P. 11. Et en effet comment peut on croire que tant de personnes peu spirituelles que la curiosité a fait trouver à cette feste, aient pû avoir une attention raisonnable à cet auguste mystere parmi tant de vains spectacles qui remplissoient leur esprit de continuelles distractions et qui le porteroient incessamment à penser à toute autre chose?

† Ibid. On sçait aussi qu’ c’est pour ce la que M. l’Archeveque de Malines avoit défendu avec grand raison non seulement de mêler des choses profanes aux choses saintes dans les processions; mais même d’y porter les images de saints quand on y porte le S. Sacrament, parce que l’expérience a fait connoître, que c’est un sujet de tentation, à la plus grande parte du peuple, qui s’occupe bien d’avantage à regarder ces images, si ornées et si bien parées, qu’à rentrer dans soy-même pour adorer Jesus Christ, etc.

‡ With this title, La Ste. Vierge Patrone Honorée et bien faisante dans la France, et dans le Luxembourg, Dessein de la procession qui se fera par les ecoliers du colege de Compagnie de Jesus, à Luxembourg le 20 May, 1685. Jour auquel l’image miraculeuse de Notre Dame de Consolation patrone du Duché de Luxembourg et Comté de Chiny sera reportée de la capitale de la province en sa chapelle.

§ Avis, p. 10. Parmi tant de choses profanes et de verses de Poètes Payens il n’y a pas un seul mot de l’écriture, qui auroit du faire seule les ornemens d’une procession vrayment Chrétienne.

there is not one word of Scripture, but several passages out of heathen poets : nothing of religion, of the benefits and beauties of it, but pagan divinities bestowing blessings, delivering from war, &c., and such a medley of falsities, to tend any way to promote holiness, when every particular is in itself destructive of it.

§. 2. Every day furnishes us with fresh instances of the strange immodesty of these gentlemen : I have shewn, p. 29, 30, 31, that it is a usual practice among them, when pressed with any passage out of the Fathers or other writers, to deny that they wrote the book out of which it is quoted ; or else to set themselves to devise some interpretation by which to avoid its force : the reader will find several instances of it, and that the inquisitors and other of their divines defend this method, and advise to use it ; but Mr. Meredith,* without any proof, affirms that when the work of any Father is quoted by Catholics, if it were ever doubted of, there is no remedy but it must pass for spurious, and when it shall happen to be undoubted, they will do as much as in them lies to render it dubious, at least in those places which are quoted. But when nothing of this will do, their last shift is interpretation ; and this (he says) is one of the methods which the Protestants use in their disputations.

It is true the Papists have forged so many authors, and corrupted others to that degree, that it is reason enough to be suspicious of everything they publish ; but we are so far from doing this, that the books we call in question are such as have evident characters of forgery in them, and which are suspected by the learned Romanists themselves ; we fairly propose our objections to be answered, which generally have that weight as to convince the more knowing of our adversaries ; we decry all such shifts as this gentleman mentions, while any one that looks into the second chapter of the following discourse will find that it is a rule among those of his communion, to invent some favourable exposition, or deny the authority and genuineness of the author.

The charge shews so much impotent malice, which would fain be doing some mischief, that I am apt to believe it is rather an insinuation of some furious missionary, than the real product of Mr. Meredith's pen ; who seems more zealous than spiteful in his erroneous profession, and knowing no better,

* Mer. Remarks, p. 70. [Lond. 1688.]

may perhaps be prevailed on to publish another's pretended observation, which neither he nor any for him can make good ; if they can, it is incumbent on them to prove it, by as full evidence as I have given of their being guilty of this disingenuous artifice.

I know the methods of these gentlemen too well to let anything pass, which may be liable to an exception, without preventing it ; if they would fairly answer a discourse, I would wait till they publish their objections ; but the trick of running about and casting virulent reflections upon particular passages in private, makes it necessary for me to give the reason why I affirm, that the cause of the great bitterness against the Waldenses was, their freedom in taxing the vices of the Pope and clergy ;* I could demonstrate the truth of it from what is acknowledged by themselves of those poor people, who could deserve such treatment upon no other account, seeing, according to Rainerus,† their bitter enemy, they were blameless in every thing, but that they spoke against the Roman Church and clergy ; but I will confirm my assertion with the authority of the *Sieur du Haillan*‡ in his *History of Philip II.*, who affirms, “that though they had some ill opinions, yet they did not irritate the Pope and princes and clergy against them, so much as their freedom of speech did; which brought upon them an universal hatred, and caused so many abominable tenets to be falsely imputed to them.”

This testimony coming from a Roman Catholic of his quality, both confirms my observation, and shews the original of those misrepresentations and calumnies we labour under, that they are purely in prosecution of their doctrine, which avows the lawfulness of slandering another to preserve one's honour ; a position which is owned and defended by their greatest casuists, and which they reduce into practice upon all occasions, as I have proved in the third chapter.

§. 3. Thus they dealt with Molinos, a few months since at Rome, insinuating that his design was, under the pretence of

* P. 82.

† Rainer. cont. Wald. c. 4. [?] *solummodo Romanam Ecclesiam blasphemant et clerum.*

‡ *Sieur du Haillan. l'Hist. du France, p. 511. Et bien qu'ils eussent des mauvaises opinions, si est ce qu'elles ne susciterent pas tant la haine du Pape, et des grands Princes, et des Ecclesiastiques contre Eux, que fut la libertie du langage ; ce fut le principal point qui les mit en haine universalle, et qui les charger de plus de mechantes opinions, qu'ils n'en avoyent.*

raising men to a higher strain of devotion, to wear out of their minds the sense of the death and sacrifice of Christ,* and attempting to persuade the people that he was descended of a Jewish or Mahometan race, and carried in his blood, or first education, some seeds of those religions: to which they added several immoral crimes, though they were ashamed to insist upon them in his process, so that their slanderous reports have gained but very little credit.

They have been so kind of late as to let us see who they were that first devised those noisy calumnies, that most of the clergy of our Church were Papists, by appearing barefaced, and endeavouring to prove that the whole controversy lay between the Dissenters and the Church of Rome;† since when, one of their greatest champions hath put on the disguise of a Dissenter,‡ and attempted to persuade us that the learned answerer of the *Nubes Testium* held several Popish principles, and that it would be all one to join with the Papists or the Church of England: but he was soon discovered by his ingenious adversary, and so exposed for his wretched artifice, that if he had not a face of an unusual composition, he would blush to appear in public after such a shameful trick: “which I hope will make our brethren the Dissenters more cautious how they entertain such surmises of those men, who so learnedly and successfully oppose Popery, when they who would be thought the only true Protestants, are content to sit still, and be lookers on.”

I expect to have the Decree§ of the 2nd of March, 1679, opposed to it, and to have a great many hard names bestowed on me for daring after that to lay such doctrines as are condemned in it, to their charge.

But besides that this Decree|| is an unanswerable evidence that those doctrines were taught by the Jesuits and other casuists, it is notoriously known that these censures are so little regarded, that they are almost contemptible.

* See the account of the Quietists in three Letters concerning the present State of Italy, p. 27, 28, etc.

† In the Agreement between the Church of England and the Church of Rome.

‡ Letter from a Dissenter, Lond. 1687, 4to. p. 2, 3. See the Answer to it, and Primitive Fathers no Papists, p. 4, 5.

§ Decree made at Rome, 2nd of March, 1679, Lond. 1679, 4to.

|| The title of it is, *Decretum SS. D. N. Innocentii Divina providentia Papæ XI. quo 65, casuistarum propositiones damnavit.*

The Apologist* for the Decree of the Senate of Venice against the Jesuists, tells us, that on this side of the Alps the censures of the Roman congregation are so little valued, that every person is at liberty to read those books, which they condemn; whose practice in this point is defended by Gretzer. That in Spain they have an Index of Prohibited Books peculiar to themselves, whereby those books are frequently allowed, which are forbidden at Rome, and many others which are permitted there, are censured in it; but at Venice they observe neither Index, nor do they admit of any of the Roman Decrees; which indeed are in themselves of no moment, being often grounded on mistakes and misconceptions,† by which the best books are sometimes prohibited and condemned. So that Doctor Holden assures us,‡ that among all thinking and sober men, there is little or no regard had to them.

And it is impossible to be otherwise: when a book shall upon the most strict examination be twice approved, and yet afterwards condemned as contrary to the faith; which is the case of Doctor Molinos at this time; whose treatise, intituled the Spiritual Guide, was in the year 1675§ printed with the approbation of the Archbishop of Rheggio, the General of the Franciscans, D'Eparsa, a Jesuit, and Qualificator of the Inquisition, and two others, and received with great applause in all places, even of the present Pope himself, who lodged him in his palace, and gave several marks of a great esteem for him: and when his book and the discourses of the now Cardinal Petrucci were afterwards upon some complaints brought before the Inquisition, and severely examined; they were again

* Bern. Ger. Pat. Apolog. p. 135, 136. [1635.] Trans Alpes Catholici non æque se vel Concilii (Tridentini) vel congregationis (Romanæ,) legibus subjecerunt, adeoque nemo sibi privilegium arrogare patitur, quod aliis plerisque omnibus liberum esse ac solutum videat; qua quidem in re nihil eos peccare, ipse Gretserus Jesuita, in libro suo primo de jure et more prohibendi libros malos, c. 38.—demonstrat. In Hispania autem alio librorum vetitorum indice utuntur, eoque sit ut plures libri palam ibi venales prostant, quos in Italia legere piacular sit; sic rursus alios ibi legere nefas habent quos Romæ nemini religio sit cognoscere. Veneti nostri, satis se Catholici hominis officio fungi arbitrantur, si libris fidem Catholicam bonosque mores ex professo oppugnantibus se abstineant; cæterum nec Romano nec Hispanico Librorum Indice se obligari patiuntur, neque eo nomine quisquam adhuc Romanorum Pontificum Venetæ Reipublicæ negotium facessere animum induxit, etc.

† See St. Amour's Journal, Par. 4. ch. 7.

‡ See his Letter at large in the History of the Irish Remonstrance, p. 524. [Lond. 1674.]

§ See the Letter about the Quietists, p. 19, 25, 26, 33, 34, 39.

approved, and the answers which the Jesuits had wrote censured as scandalous; but upon the interposition of the French King the same treatises were condemned by that very Court which had approved them, Molinos publicly exposed and sentenced to perpetual imprisonment; Cardinal Petrucci under disgrace, and “the Pope himself so far suspected, that some were deputed by the Inquisition to examine him;” so heretical were those opinions now, which but a little before were sound and orthodox.

That passion and interest, as Doctor Holden observes,* influence all the determinations of that Court, is so well known to our English Romanists, that the author of *Nubes Testium* not only read, but transcribed his whole book out of Alexander Natalis; though the Pope had two years before† forbidden all the faithful, under pain of incurring excommunication *ipso facto* without any other denunciation, to read, keep, print, transcribe, or use any of that friar’s works; and when his learned adversary‡ told him of this, he makes so light of it,§ as to turn it off with a flout as a matter not worth regarding, and not only so, but he affirms that Natalis was then of very good repute as to his authorities and everything else.

And as little respect have the Romanists of France shewn to the decree of March 2, 1679, for by the Jesuit’s means,|| who informed the Procurator-General, that since the Court of Inquisition was not acknowledged in France, it would be prejudicial to the King’s authority to suffer any decree made in it to be printed there, a remonstrance was made to the Court of Parliament at Paris, and the censure declared to be of no authority in that kingdom; for an impression that was made of it was called in, since which it hath not been publicly sold in France.

* In his Letter before cited.

† By his Breve of July 10, 1684, wherein are these words, *De Apostolicæ potestatis plenitudine omnes et singulos libros supradictos tenore præsentium damnamus et reprobamus, ac legi, seu retineri prohibemus, ipsorumque librorum omnium et singulorum impressionem, descriptionem, lectionem et usum, omnibus et singulis Christi fidelibus etiam specifica et individua mentione et expressione dignis, sub pœna excommunicationis per contra facientes ipso facto absque alia declaratione incurrenda—omnino interdicimus.* See it at large in *Nouvelle de la Rep. des Lettres*, 8vo. 1684.

‡ Answ. to *Nubes Testium* in the Pref. p. 4. Lond. 1688, 4to.

§ Primit. Fath. no Prot. p. 7, 8. [Lond. 1687.]

|| See Burnet’s *History of the Regale*, Pref. p. 38. [Lond. 1682.] and his *Sermon* on Jan. 30, 1680-81, before the Lord Mayor, p. 21, 22.

“The pretence of the Jesuits for procuring this act was the honour of the King, but the true motive appears to be their love to the propositions condemned in it: for the first draught of the declaration of the Parliament had these words,* Though these propositions are justly condemned; but Father le Chaise caused them to be struck out.”

Thus in this part of the world we find the censures of that Court to have no authority, and even among those who pretend to own them, a Faculty may take off the obligation, and they be dispensed with from yielding obedience to them; and we know that such private dispensations are not difficult to be obtained in the Roman Court. So that upon all accounts, the Romanists, according to their own principles and practices, are at liberty still to teach those doctrines which are censured in that decree; and there is some reason to believe that it was not designed to hinder them, but only to amaze the world, seeing it was not made by the Pope in Consistory, which would have given it much more authority than the Cardinals of the Court of Inquisition could stamp upon it.

§. 4. In the fourth Chapter I have mentioned the Bulla Cœnæ as a lasting evidence of the claim which the Pope lays to a power over kings, but not having the bull by me, I only gave a short hint of it from a late author of that communion: but I find in Cardinal Tolet,† that not only the persons there

* Policy of the French clergy, p. 67, 68. [Lond. 1681.] When this decree was objected in a disputation at Toulon against one of the propositions condemned in it, the Moderator who defended that position answered, that it was not made by the Pope in Consistory. And Mr. de la Berchere, now A. B. of Aix, ordered the Morals of M. Abelly (which maintain many of the points censured in that decree) to be taught in his seminary. See Avis au R. R. P. P. Jesuits de Aix en Provence sur Imprimè qui a pour Titre, Ballet danse à la Reception de M. l'Archevêque d'Aix, p. 49, 51, 52, 61. A Col. 1687, 12s.

† See Tolet. Instruct. Sacerdot. cap. 20. ad 32. [Venet. 1616.] Fulminatur contra hæreticis credentes, receptatores, legentes paucas lineas librorum hæreticorum.—Appellantes ad futurum concilium—imponentes nova pedagia seu gabellas in terris suis, præterquam in casibus sibi à jure ex speciali sedis Apostolicæ licentia permissis; qui deferunt ad infideles aut hæreticos arma et equos, ligamina, eorumque materiam, ferrum silum ferri, stannum, et alia metallorum genera, etc. eos qui aliqua injuria afficiunt venientes ad sedem Apostolicam,—eos qui avocant causas beneficiales à commissariis Apostolicis, et autoritate laicali impediunt earum cursum; vel executionem literarum Apostolicarum,—eos qui impediunt Archiepiscopos, etc. ne possint uti jurisdictione Ecclesiastica; occupantes quævis loca jurisdictionis Ecclesia Romanæ, sive sint fructus, sive redditus, sine licentia Romani Pontificis.—Imponentes onera, decimas, etc. quibuscunque

mentioned are excommunicated every year, but that the absolution which is given the next day after the publishing of that bull, extends not to such as impose taxes on their people without the Pope's consent, who imprison or punish, or otherwise bring a clergyman into secular courts, who harbour heretics, or read so much as two or three lines in their books; who furnish heretics with arms or materials for arms, with ships or timber to build them with; who hinder appeals or journeys to Rome, who hinder the Romish clergy from exercising their jurisdiction, and who possess any church-lands or goods; but all these are left under the sentence of excommunication, till by repentance they obtain absolution from his Holiness; and all ecclesiastical persons are required to publish this bull in the greatest congregations, that all the faithful may know the contents of it.

Thus his Majesty of Great Britain, the French King, the States of Venice and Holland, Sweden, Denmark, the Princes of Germany, &c. are excommunicated by this bull; who have done and daily do refuse to observe several, if not every part of it: and what they look upon an excommunicated prince to be, may be seen in their canon law,* whereby all those who have sworn allegiance to him, are absolved from their oaths, and forbid to yield him any manner of obedience.

I reserve the account of their treasons to be published whenever Mr. Pulton, or any for him, shall think fit to begin with us, as he hath threatened he would upon the first provocation, *which I have given him*, but having affirmed, p. 71, 72, that they have been often both in public courts of justice and in other places, called upon to renounce the deposing power as unlawful, but could not be persuaded to it; "to prevent their cavils at that assertion, I thought it not unnecessary to give some few instances, which may suffice to prove it."

We are assured by the greatest statesman of his, and perhaps

Personis Ecclesiasticis—quoscunque Magistratus et quomodo libet se interponentes in causis criminalibus personarum Ecclesiasticarum—Protestatur Pontifex absolutionem solennem in Die Jovis cœnæ faciendam non comprehendere nec suffragari ulli ex prædictis, nisi prius à commissis cum vero proposito similia non committendi destiterint.—Præcipit in virtute sanctæ obedientiæ Patriarchis, etc. ubi libet constitutis, ut præsentis literas semel in anno aut pluries in Ecclesiis suis, dum in eis major Populi multitudo ad divina convenerit, solemniter publicent.

* Caus. 15. can. Nos Sanctorum. Eos qui excommunicatis fidelitate aut sacramento obstricti sunt, Apostolica auctoritate à juramento absolvimus, et ne sibi fidelitatem observent omnibusmodis prohibemus.

of any age, that the priests who were apprehended and executed for treason in his time,* always restrained their confession of allegiance only to be the permissive form of the Pope's toleration: as for example, if they were asked whether they did acknowledge themselves the Queen's subjects, and would obey her; they would answer, yes, for they had leave for a time so to do; and at their very arraignment, when they laboured to leave in the minds of the people an opinion that they were to die, not for treason, but for matter of faith and doctrine—they cried out that they were true subjects, and did and would obey her Majesty; immediately—they were asked, by the Queen's learned counsel, whether they would obey and be true subjects if the Pope commanded the contrary, they answered by the mouth of Campion, this place (meaning the Court of her Majesty's Bench) hath no power to judge of the Holy Father's authority; and other answer they would not make.

The very same account of them, with some other particulars, is given us by the secular priests, in their† Important Considerations; that being asked which part they would take, if the Pope or any others by his appointment should invade the realm; some answered, when that case happened, they would then consider what they had best to do; others, that they were not resolved what to do; and others positively, that if any such deprivation or invasion should be made for a matter of faith, they were then bound to take part with the Pope. Which Mr. Campion was so zealous for, that he was not contented to affirm that he would take part with his Holiness,‡ but very earnestly demanded pen, ink and paper, that he might sign his resolution. And Mr. Kirby, Cotton, Richardson, Ford, Shert, Johnson, Hart, and Filbee, all priests, affirmed under their hands to her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to examine them, that the Pope hath power to depose princes, and her Majesty was not to be obeyed against his Holiness's bull;§ in which answer they all agreed, only two sheltered themselves under this general assertion, that they held as the Catholic Church held.

And his Majesty of blessed memory, King James,|| tells us,

* See Declarat. of the favourable dealing of her Majesty's Commiss. p. 4. 1583, 4to.

† P. 68. [Lond. 1606.]

‡ Hunting of the Romish Fox, p. 146, 147. [Dubl. 1683.]

§ Fowlis, Hist. of Rom. Treas. p. 55, 56, 57, 58. [Lond. 1681.]

|| Premonition, p. 291. of his works. [Lond. 1616.]

that the conspirators who suffered for the Gunpowder treason, justified themselves, and even at their deaths would acknowledge no fault ;* and when Faux and Winter were admitted to discourse together in the Tower, they affirmed, they were sorry that no body set forth a defence or apology for the action ; but yet they would maintain the cause at their death.

When some of the plotters† escaped to Calais, and the governor assured them of the King's favour, and that though they lost their country, they should be received there ; they replied, that the loss of their country was the least part of their grief, but their sorrow was, that they could not bring so *brave a design* to perfection ; and not only they who were engaged in it justified the design, but Mr. Copley‡ assures us, that he could never meet with any one Jesuit who blamed it.

“Some time after the Jesuits were banished France, for the attempt upon the King by Chastel§ one of their scholars, when they were soliciting a repeal of that sentence, the Parliament of Paris remonstrated to the King, that it was absolutely necessary for them to renounce those treasonable doctrines of the Pope's power over princes, or else France could not with safety admit them to return ; but though they were very desirous of admission, they would not renounce those positions for it.”

It is notoriously known how many briefs were sent over into England to forbid the taking the Oath of Allegiance, which they affirm to contain many things contrary to the Catholic faith.

“Immediately after the murder of King Henry IV. of France, the Jesuits|| desired leave to teach schools in their colleges, upon which the Parliament required, that they should first declare, that it is unlawful for any person to conspire the death of the King, that no ecclesiastic hath any power over the temporal rights of princes, and that all are to yield the same obedience to their governors which Christ gave to Cæsar ; these positions were proposed to them to subscribe, but they refused to do it without leave from their General.”

* Account of the Proceedings, p. 126.

† Hist. of the Gunp. Treas. p. 29. [Lond. 1681.]

‡ Copley's Reasons, p. 23. [Lond. 1612.]

§ See Hist. Jesuit. p. 164. [Tig. 1670.] Oportet igitur ut illi qui tenent et in regno vestro manere volunt, eas (sc. opiniones) publice in suis collegiis abjurent. One was dated Sept. 22, 1606. Another Aug. 23, 1607. A third Feb. 1, 1608. And a fourth, May 30, 1626.

|| Hist. Jesuit. p. 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225.

Ann. 1614, Father Ogilby, a Jesuit, was taken in Scotland, who being asked whether the Pope* be judge in spirituals over his Majesty, refused to answer except the question were put to him by his Holiness's authority, but affirmed that the Pope might excommunicate the King; and that he would not to save his life, say it is unlawful, if the King be deposed by the Pope, to kill him.

In the time of the late confusions, when Mr. Cressy,† published the reasons of his leaving the Church of England and turning Romanist; he therein inserted a declaration differing little from the Oath of Allegiance, affirming that all the Roman Catholics in England were ready to sign it; but his superiors were of another mind, and therefore that edition‡ was soon bought up, and the profession of Obedience omitted in the second: and when some English gentlemen of that communion had subscribed certain propositions§ of the same import with that declaration, their subscribing was by the Roman congregation censured as unlawful.

What opposition was made to the Irish Remonstrance, after the King's restoration, is generally known, and I have given a short account in the third and fourth chapters; all that I shall remark here is this, that it was a transcript of Mr. Cressy's declaration which the Pope forbade the Irish clergy,|| and they refused to sign. "Nay, when Father Walsh advised them to beg his Majesty's pardon for the execrable rebellion, they not only refused to ask pardon, but so much as to acknowledge that there was any need of it; affirming publicly, *that they knew none at all guilty of any crime for anything done in the war.*"

They often offered to declare, that the deposing power was not their doctrine,¶ but could not be persuaded to condemn the doctrine which abets it as unsound and sinful, wherein they have been imitated** by some late writers on their side, who though called upon to affirm it unlawful to maintain such a power over kings, would never do it. But though Father

* Franck. Ann. p. 6, 7. [Lond. 1681.]

† Cressy's Exomolog. p. 72. Par. 1647, 8vo.

‡ Lord Clarendon against Cressy, p. 76, 77. [Lond. 1674.]

§ Hist. of the Ir. Remonst. p. 523, 524. [Lond. 1674.]

|| Hist. of the Irish Rem. Pref. p. 3, 4.

¶ Hist. of Ir. Rem. p. 763.

** See Pap. not misrep. by Prot. p. 58. 1688, 4to. and Answer to Pap. Prot. against Prot. Popery. p. 131. Lond. 1686, 4to.

Cann would not renounce these doctrines, he proposed at Rome that a formal Oath abjuring the Oath of Allegiance should be imposed upon those who had taken it ; and that all who should be admitted students in the Jesuits' house,* should *swear* never to take the *Oath* : since, as he affirmed, a time might come, in which it would be necessary for their interests, that they be under no such tie to an heretical prince.

§. 5. The last chapter of the following sheets, gives a brief account of some of their artifices to misrepresent the doctrines of the Reformed Churches ; for every single instance, I might have given some hundreds, for I never yet saw any of their controversial writings which represent our doctrines as they are ; but lest I should be charged with imitating such a bad example, I desire the reader to take notice that the first quotation out of *Securis Evangelica*,† is not quoted as a strict misrepresentation, but to shew how while they tell us,‡ that the people swallow all down greedily in the lump, that antecedents and consequents go down with them all at once, and therefore we ought not to draw odious consequences from their doctrines ; they are doing that which they blame us for, and are licensed to do it by the greatest licensers of their Church : now if their rule be good, then is Father Porter guilty of a notorious misrepresentation in that instance ; if it be not good, then they must acquit us from that imputation which with so much noise and little reason they have endeavoured to fix upon us : let them choose which side they think best.

§. 6. Before I close the Preface, I must take notice of one thing more which I have not touched in the book itself, it being my design there only to prevent the danger of their usual manner of address ; which would be of no force, if our people did not give them a very great advantage by running on all occasions into disputes with them ; I would not have them kept in ignorance (*for blessed be God, our cause needs no Romish arts to uphold it*), but it is an ill thing to be making experiments in religion, and for unskilful and weak men to be trying their skill, with those who by reason of their sophistry will be found too hard for them ; I cannot, therefore, but earnestly request the reader to keep them (if he fall into their company) to plain Scripture, which it is his duty to be well

* See Three Letters of the Present State of Italy, p. 46. [1688.]

† See p. 84. [Rom. 1687.]

‡ Pap. Protest. against Prot. Popery, p. 18, 19. [ut supra.]

acquainted with ; or else to propose their arguments to some learned minister, and I dare appeal to the judgment of any impartial person on which side the truth lies. I designed to have published some directions for the help of the unlearned, by which they might be able to deal with the missionaries, but I am happily prevented by the learned and Reverend Doctor Sherlock, whose seasonable and excellent discourse* ought to be in the hands of all Protestants, who by it may be enabled to deal with the greatest champion among them ; and I am heartily glad that so good a pen hath undertaken a work of that consequence, and I hope in a little time will oblige the world with the second part ; in the meanwhile the Answer which hath appeared against it,† hath shewed the world how little can be said for Popery.

§. 7. I would not have the gentlemen of the Church of Rome pretend that I have (as one of their celebrated writers expresses himself) imitated the scavenger in stopping nowhere but at a dunghill, for I have quoted none but allowed and approved authors ; such as are daily published with allowance by their party, and therefore they ought not to be ashamed of, or such as have been long received with applause among them ; and as for what I have cited out of Protestant books, let them invalidate their testimony if they can, I will engage for the truth of my quotations, and know of no objections against any author I have cited which are of any force.

§. 8. I design very speedily to publish the Second Part, giving an account of several other artifices by which they endeavour to possess the people with favourable opinions of them ; such as their miracles, the brags of the holiness of their Church, of their succession, unity, and certainty ; of the usefulness of their confession, and that all antiquity is on their side ; exposing their method of disgracing the holy Scripture, of forging and corrupting authors, the sowing several sects and heresies to divide us ; and that successful artifice of disguising and palliating their doctrines ; to which add the working on the people's affections, by asking, *what is become of their Popish ancestors?* and blinding their judgments by perplexing and sophistical similitudes ; with several other topics which they frequently insist on.

But after all that we can do, it is God alone must give the

* In his Preservative against Popery, Lond. 1688, 4to.

† Answer to Dr. Sherlock's Preservative against Popery, Lond. 1688, 4to. Pap. Prot. against Prot. Popery, p. 17. [ut supra.]

blessing, who is the *God of truth*, to whom if our prayers be constant and fervent, and our obedience to his commands universal and sincere, he is engaged by his promise, which can never fail, to keep us in the truth ; in which that all who read this treatise may continue unmoved, and order their conversations so as becomes the *gospel of truth and holiness*, is the hearty prayer of the author of it.

That the gentlemen of the Church of Rome may have all the help in the world to convince me of falsifications, if they can ; and to spare them that trouble which they put us to, by careless and ignorant quotations, I have here given them a catalogue of the books cited in the ensuing treatise, with their editions.

Arcana Societatis Jesu, edit. 1635, 8vo.

Acts of the Conference at Paris, 1566, *Lond.* 1602, 4to.

Acosta de noviss. tempor. *Ludg.* 1592, 8vo.

Answer to the Consid. on the Spirit of Martin Luther, *Oxford*, 1687, 4to.

Animadv. on Fanaticism fanatically imputed to the Catholic Church, *Lond.* 1674, 8vo.

Animadversions on a Sermon of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.

Augustini Opera, *Paris*, 1571, folio.

Ambrosii Opera, *Col.* 1616, folio.

Answer to the Provin. Letters, *Paris*, 1659, 8vo.

Advice to the Confuter of Bellarmine, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.

The Agreement between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.

Athanasii Opera, *Col.* 1686, folio.

Answer to the Letter of a Dissenter, printed for H. Hills, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.

Answer to two main Questions of the first Letter to a Dissenter, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.

Answer to a Discourse against Transubstantiation, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.

Avis aux R.R.P.P. Jesuits sur leur Procession de Luxembourg, edit. 1685, 12s.

Answer to the Letter from a Dissenter, *Lond.* 1688, 4to.

Answer to Pap. Prot. against Prot. Popery, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.

Answer to Dr. Sherlock's Preservative against Popery, *Lond.* 1688, 4to.

- Avis aux R.R. P.P. Jesuits d'Aix en Provence. Sur un imprimé qui à pour Titre : Ballet dansé à la Reception de Monseigneur Archêveque d'Aix, *a Col.* 1687, 12s.
- Burnet's Answer to the Letter of the French Clergy, *Lond.* 1683, 8vo.
- Bellarmini Controvers. *Colon.* 1628, folio.
- Baronii Annales, *Antwerp*, 1610, folio.
- Dr. Burnet's Letters of his Travels, *Rotterdam*, 1687, 8vo.
- Lucae Brugensis in Evangel. *Antw.* 1606, folio.
- Archbishop Bramhal's Works, *Dublin*, 1676, folio.
- Dr. Burnet's History of the Reformation, *Lond.* 1670, folio.
- His Vindication of the Ordin. of the Church of England, *Lond.* 1677, 8vo.
- His History of the Rights of Princes, *Lond.* 1682, 8vo.
- Bernardi Giraldi Patavini Apologia pro Repub. Venetorum—*vid.* Arcana Societatis Jesu.
- Birkbeck's Protestant Evidence, *Lond.* 1635, 4to.
- Baiting of the Pope's Bull, *Lond.* 1627, 4to.
- Burnet's Sermon before the Lord Mayor, January 30, 1680-81, 4to.
- F. Cross's Sermon before the Queen, April 21, 1686, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
- Considerations on the Spirit of Martin Luther, *Oxford*, 1687, 4to.
- Jesuits' Catechism, Edit. 1602, 4to.
- P. Crasset la veritable Devotion envers la S. Vierge, *Paris*, 1679, 4to.
- Discourse of Communion under both Species, by the Bishop of Meaux, *Paris*, 1685, 12s.
- Conference with Campion in the Tower, *Lond.* 1583, 4to.
- Crashaw's Falsificationum Romanarum, Tomi primi, lib. primus, *Lond.* 1606, 4to.
- Catholic Scripturist. *Lond.* 1686, 8vo.
- Chrysostomi Opera, *Paris*, 1636.
- Canones et Decreta Consilii Tridentini, *Col.* 1577, 12s.
- Contzeni Politica, *Mogunt.* 1620, folio.
- Collection of Treatises concerning Penal Laws, *Lond.* 1675, 4to.
- Copley's Reasons of his Departure from the Church of Rome, *Lond.* 1612, 4to.
- Cressy's Exomologesis, *Paris*, 1647, 8vo.
- Cressener's Vindication, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
- Jo. Camerarius, de Frat. Orthod. Eccles. in Bohemia, deest mihi Titulus.

- Campion's Reasons, *Lond.* 1687, 4to. And the same in Latin, *Cosmop.* 1581.
- Corpus Confessionum Fidei, *Gen.* 1654, 4to.
- The Connexion, *Lond.* 1681, 8vo.
- Conference entre deux Docteurs de Sorbonne, &c. Edit. 1566, 8vo.
- Drelincourt's Protestants' Self Defence, *Lond.* 1685, 12s.
- Defence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.
- Discovery of the Society in Relation to their Politicks, *Lond.* 1658, 8vo.
- Defence of the Confutation of Bellarmine's second Note of the Church, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
- Defence of the Papers written by the late King, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.
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- Decree made at Rome, March 2, 1679, 4to.
- Europæ Speculum, *Lond.* 1687, 8vo.
- Captain Everard's Epistle to the Nonconformists, Edit. 1664, 8vo.
- Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.
- Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, *Lond.* 1685, 4to.
- F. Ellis's Sermon before the King, Dec. 5, 1686, 4to.
- Fifth part of Church Government, *Oxford*, 1687, 4to.
- Fowlis's History of Romish Treasons, *Lond.* 1681, folio.
- Frankland's Annals, *Lond.* 1681, folio.
- The Franciscan Convert, *Lond.* 1673, 4to.
- Gage's new Survey of the West Indies, *Lond.* 1655, folio.
- Gee's Foot out of the Snare, *Lond.* 1624, 4to.
- The Gunpowder Treason, with a Discourse of the Manner of its Discovery, *Lond.* 1679, 8vo.
- Good Advice to the Pulpits, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
- Gratian, Edit. 1518, 4to.

- Hospiniani Historia Jesuitica, *Tig.* 1670, folio.
 History of the Irish Rebellion, *Lond.* 1680, folio.
 Dr. Harsenet's Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures in casting out Devils, *Lond.* 1603, 4to.
 The Hind and Panther, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
 Hunting the Romish Fox, *Dubl.* 1683, 4to.
 History of Geneva by Mr. Spon, *Lond.* 1687, folio.
 History of the Church of Great Britain, from the Birth of our Saviour, *Lond.* 1674, 4to.
 History of the Powder Treason, *Lond.* 1681, 4to.
 Histoire de France par Seigneur du Haillan, deest mihi titulus.
 Instructiones secret. pro super. Societ. Jesu, see Arcana societ. Jesu.
 Index expurg. librorum qui hoc seculo prodierunt. Edit. 1586, 12s.
 Instance of the Church of England's Loyalty, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
 The Jesuit's Reasons Unreasonable, *Lond.* 1662, 4to. See Collection of Treatises.
 Important Considerations, *Lond.* 1606, 4to. It is in the Collection of Treatises concerning the Penal Laws.
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 Masoni, Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, *Lond.* 1625, folio.
 Mirrour for Saints and Sinners, *Lond.* 1671, folio.
 Manual of Controversies, *Doway*, 1671, 8vo.
 Monomachia, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
 Mr. Meredith's Remarks on Dr. Tennison's Account, *Lond.* 1688, 4to.
 Nouvelle de la Republique des Lettres, *Juin*, 1686, 8vo.
 Novelty of Popery, by Dr. Du Moulin, *Lond.* 1664, folio.
 Nubes Testium, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.

- New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
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 Ogilby's Japan, *Lond.* 1670, folio.
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 Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of Meaux, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.
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 Parson's Treatise tending to Mitigation, 1607, 8vo.
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 A Picture of a Papist, Edit. 1606, 8vo,
 Primitive Fathers no Protestants, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
 Preservative against Popery, by Dr. Sherlock, *Lond.* 1688, 4to.
 Primitive Fathers no Papists, *Lond.* 1688, 4to.
 Papists not Misrepresented by Protestants, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.
 Papists Protesting against Protestant Popery, *Lond.* 1686, 4to.
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 Reynerus adv. Waldenses, *Ingol.* 1613, 4to.
 Rogers's Faith, Doctrine, and Religion, professed in England, *Cambr.* 1681, 4to.
 Reasons of Fryer Neville's Conversion, *Lond.* 1642, 4to.
 Reflexions on the Historical Part of the Fifth Part of Church Government, *Oxford*, 1687, 4to.

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- His Miscellanea, *Lond.* 1686, 8vo.
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- St. Amour's Journal, *Lond.* 1664, folio.
- Seissellius adv. Valden. *Paris*, 1520.
- Securis Evangelica, *Rom.* 1687, 8vo.
- A Supplication to the King's most excellent Majesty, *Lond.* 1604, 4to.
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- Vasquez de Cultu Adorationis, *Mog.* 1601, 8vo.
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- Vindication of the Sincerity of the Protestant Religion, *Lond.* 1679, 4to.
- Veritas Evangelica, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
- The Use and great Moment of the Notes of the Church, *Lond.* 1687, 4to.
- Walsh's History of the Irish Remonstrance, *Lond.* 1674, folio.
- His four Letters on several Subjects, 1686, 8vo.
- Wilson's History of Great Britain, *Lond.* 1653, folio.

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING observed the difference between the method followed by Protestant Divines, and that which the gentlemen of the Church of Rome take, in their unwearied endeavours, for gaining proselytes ; I have several times taken notice, that instead of handling particular controversies, they, for the most part, wholly decline them, and take another course ; wherein what their design is, will easily be apprehended, if we consider that their experience tells them, that prejudice is the main prop of their Church, which renders their people deaf to whatever is objected to their doctrines ; and they know very well how far that goes to make them believe whatever is imposed on them. It is an usual thing to hear the common people justify themselves in matters of practice by the examples of those they have an esteem for ; and if they can find any thing they are blamed for, countenanced or practised by a person they look upon as a pious or wise man, it is their common argument, such a man, who is much better and wiser than I, is of this opinion, or acts as I do, and why may not I ? I am sure he would not do it if it were not lawful : which observation those masters of craft, who manage even the eternal affairs of souls, by the wiles of policy and cunning, make such use of, as to bend all their endeavours to create in the people a good opinion of them, and then they know their work is as good as done ; and not only my own observation assures me that this is their design, but I offer this evidence of it ; among all the Romish converts you shall scarce find one, who is able to give you any particular reason for his change, but only this, that he cannot think so holy a Church would deceive him ; and he is convinced, that it is his duty in all things to submit to her without examining her doctrines, which is a clear proof that their main endeavour is to insinuate themselves into the good opinion of those they would pervert ; and having sufficiently possessed them with such favourable thoughts, they easily prevail upon them to give themselves up to be conducted by them ; so that prejudice and affection makes more Papists than evidence of truth and reason.

Thus by insisting upon generals to possess the affections, rather than inform the judgments of men, they go on uncontrolled ; our divines going the fairer way to work, and aiming at the rectifying men's understandings, not the forming of a party of proselytes, as if truth was to be found by the voices of the giddy multitude, and not by rational and convincing evidence ;

which made the ingenious Answerer to the Dean of London-derry, profess, "that he always believed that they rather designed to gain proselytes by confounding their heads, than by clear reason and information;"* their design being, "to make a shew of saying somewhat, ours to instruct our people."† I have had occasion to be acquainted with several of their converts, and do profess I could hardly ever meet with any who understood the matters in dispute, but acknowledged it was the force of these general arguments that prevailed on them to a change.

And this way is not only followed by some among them, but the whole clergy of France‡ have propounded general methods to be prosecuted to this end, and the University of Louvain§ have published theirs.

Finding therefore that all their success proceeded from particular artifices, I thought it my duty to endeavour to prevent their doing any farther mischief, by laying them open to the world, that the unchristian sleights being discovered, and their force enervated, the people may be upon their guard, knowing what dealing they are to expect from those busy men, and not be so easily possessed with those fatal prejudices which they labour to instil into them, in order to enslave them to such a number of errors and superstitions as no one sect besides was ever guilty of, which I shall endeavour to do in the following chapters.

CHAP. I.

OF THEIR MANNER OF ADDRESS.

WHEN the Missionaries have a design on any particular person, after acquaintance once got, they are very cautious not to begin to insist closely upon any religious subject, until by their industry and diligent observation they have discovered the disposition and inclination of their intended proselyte. This is one of the secret rules found in the College of Jesuits

* Answer to the Considerations which obliged Peter Manby, &c. p. 3. Lond. 1687, 4to.

† Summary of the Principal Controversies, p. 3. Lond. 1687, 4to.

‡ See Burnet's Answer to the Method of the French Clergy, 8vo. 1683.

§ *Mysterium Pietatis*, Ultraj. 8vo. 1686.

at Paderborn : that “in attempting to gain young men to list themselves in their order,* they endeavour to please them with such diversions as are best suited to their tempers, and most apt to allure them to be of that society, where they meet with what is so agreeable to their inclinations.” It is indeed usual with them to cast out several loose words, either concerning the holiness and certainty of their faith, or the uncertainty and vanity of the Protestants, which they know are so many latent darts, which will pierce deeper when other arguments come to drive them on : but till they find how the disposition of the person lies, they cannot practise their several arts, which vary according as the tempers differ of those they deal with.

Their character of religious men gives them always an opportunity to discourse with a serious look and grave accent of the great things of salvation, which they seldom or never omit to lay hold on, seeing such discourses are very apt to make impressions upon the minds of those who are devoutly inclined ; and if the person they deal with be such an one, they are very proper and seasonable to be used to him ; and on the other hand, if he be not, they can put no stop to their design, for by their reiterated pretences of zeal for the salvation of souls, their frequent instances of their trouble to see so many led in error, and ready to perish, and their free offering the utmost of their service for so good a work, with their earnest and serious urging the great danger a Protestant is in, they gain even with the loose and vicious, a good opinion of them, that they are really in earnest, and believe and design what they pretend ; and there being scarce such a thing in the world as a real speculative Atheist, they know that all are desirous of happiness hereafter, though not willing to leave their sins for it ; therefore even with the worst they get this advantage, that by their lamentations and zealous pretences they are believed to have a design only to lead them to heaven, which point gained, they know how to accommodate their doctrine even to those, by offering them such an easy way to future happiness, that distasting the sour methods of repentance, and universal holiness, they will willingly go where they have hopes of gaining heaven, and keeping their sins too.

* Instruct. secret. pro super. Societat. Jesu. p. 17. It is one of the pieces published in the Arcana Societat. Jesu. 8vo. 1635. See it in English, printed at London for Tho. Dring, 1658, 8vo. in the 2nd part of the Mystery of Jesuitism.

By this means being sure to gain by serious discourses, whoever they have to deal with, you will certainly meet with as heavenly and religious expressions as can be invented ; and after they have enlarged upon the worth of souls, the importance of the right faith, and their own intentions being only to enlighten those who are in the darkness of heresy, which they will express with the utmost of their rhetoric, and set off with the most devout looks, and earnest actions ; they will vary their expressions, to find out what is most taking ; sometimes they will tell you we require what God never commanded, by teaching those duties* under pain of damnation which are in themselves not necessary, and the omission of them only venial transgressions, which do not in themselves deserve damnation ; and that we call those mortal sins, affirming that all are absolutely obliged to avoid them, which God never esteemed as such ; and that we make the case of Christians too hard, affirming that there is no difference between counsels and commands, whereby we bind every one to do those things which none, according to them, except by a particular vow, are obliged to ; that we affirm all our duties to be so imperfect, that they are in themselves sins, thereby discouraging Christians in their performance of them, and affronting the grace of God, as if he could not enable us to keep all his commands perfectly, but there will still be imperfections in their performances, which make work for daily repentance, so overburthening the consciences of Christians, where God hath not done it. This, they know will be greedily caught at by the libertine, who is glad to hear of an easier way to heaven than the Protestant Church shews to her members ; and if the person they address to, should happen to be of a devout and severe principle, they know how to make use of the same charge, to work their ends ; by complaining, that whereas God hath left some things only recommended by way of counsel, we by preaching them as commands take away all the merit of those performances, which is greater where men are left free, than when they are obliged under penalties ; and that we do thereby frighten men from real holiness ; and by such a general discourse, which they can apply to all tempers, they make their way towards fixing a good opinion of themselves, in the minds of men, who

* Thus where we teach meditation to be the duty of every Christian, Father Cross, in his sermon before the Queen, April 21st, 1686, saith, " I do not approve the opinion of those who hold it obligatory to all."

are much taken, if they be inclined to vice, with the hopes of more liberty, which is offered them under the show of holiness ; and if serious, with the hopes of meriting, and attaining to a greater degree of glory by their free uncommanded obedience, than they could expect from an obedience yielded only to severe commands ; for the feeding of whose humour they will enlarge upon that usual topic, that “ we have no repentance nor good works in our Church,” (a scandal which they often cast upon us), and consequently have “ none of that strictness which a pious soul delights in ;” and this seeming argument for the greatest strictness they can turn to the encouragement of an idle and vain disposition, by extolling the easiness of their absolution and penance, when we take such methods as keep a man all his life to a serious examination and inquiry whether his repentance be sincere.

These discourses, and such as these, being applicable to all sorts of men, are common with them even at first ; but when they have made a discovery of your dispositions, they come more particularly to their several methods, which are suited to each temper ; and having endeavoured with all their power of actions, as well as words, to render themselves esteemed, according to that secret instruction to the Superiors of the Jesuits,* that “ they should ingratiate themselves with the people, by shewing the end of the Society to be as tender of the welfare of their neighbour as of their own ; and upon this account undergo the meanest offices, visit the hospitals, and assist the poor ; make charitable collections, and dispose of them to the poor in public, that others being excited by their liberality, may be the more kind to the Society.” They begin afresh, if they deal with a devout soul, to enlarge upon their care of souls, and their unwillingness to meddle with these matters, being more inclined to the more practical duties, as when the Jesuits have a mind to advance any of their partisans to a high place in any prince’s court, they are directed to “ insist upon the great concern that religion and justice hath in those who are advanced to dignities, and therefore that such

* *Instructiones pro super. Societ. Jesu*, p. 4.—*Ut se gratam et acceptam præbeat societas incolis loci ; multum ad hoc conducet explicatio finis societatis, præscripti in regula secunda summarii, incumbere in salutem proximi æque ac suam. [ut supra.] Quare humilia obsequia obeunda, in Xenodochiis, et simo jacentes invisendi.—Eleemosynæ conquirendæ, dandæque pauperibus, aliis videntibus, ut ædificati facto nostrorum sint in nos liberaliores.*

ought to be elected as are eminent for their virtues, which they are to enumerate, and then be sure to propose a friend of the Society's, as endued with the virtues they before commended ; but at the same time express their unwillingness to meddle."* Just so they govern themselves in making converts among the piously inclined ; and as Sir Edwin Sands† observes of their gestures, and such pretences, " When a friar, an abandoner of the world, a man wholly wrapt with divine affections and ecstasies ; his apparel denouncing contempt of all earthly vanity, his countenance preaching severity, penance, and discipline, breathing nothing but sighs for the hatred of sin ; his eyes lifted upward as fixed on his joys ; his head bowed on the one side with tenderness of love and humility, extending his ready hand to lay hold on men's souls, to snatch them out of the fiery jaws of that gaping black dragon, and to place them in the path that conducts to happiness ; when such a man, I say, shall address himself to a woman—or to any other vulgar person of what sort soever, persuading, beseeching with all plausible motions of reason, yea, with sighs of fear and tears of love, instancing and importuning no other thing at their hands than only this, to be content to suffer God to save their souls, and to crown them with everlasting happiness ; which they shall certainly attain by ranging themselves with the heavenly army of God, that is, by adjoining themselves to the Church of Christ and his Vicar ; and this again and again iterated and pursued with show of incredible care of their good, without seeking other meed and commodity to himself, save only of being the instrument of a soul's salvation : is it to be marvelled, though—he prevail and possess them in such forcible sort, that no access remain for any contrary persuasion—and certainly by their dealing thus with men at single hand in private—they prevail, as experience doth daily shew, exceedingly."

But as they take this method to deal with some, so they address themselves to others in a quite contrary manner, they

* Ibid. p. 30.—*Sæpe inculcent principibus, distributionem honorum et dignitatum in Repub. spectare ad justitiam ; graviterque deum offendi si contra eam à principibus peccetur ; se tamen nolle dicant ingerere in ullam administrationem reip. et hæc se invitos dicere ratione sui officii ; quod ubi apprehenderint principes, explicetur ipsis, quibus virtutibus præditi esse debeant viri assumendi ad dignitates reip. commendationis capita sumantur, ex amicis societatis nostræ, etc.*

† *Europæ Speculum*, p. 71, 72. Lond. 1687, 8vo.

having (as I shall prove more particularly hereafter) not only several ways of insinuation, but several, yea contrary doctrines framed on purpose to be as baits for all sorts of men; which, as I have often observed, so I find it noted by that ingenious gentleman, who had spent a great part of his time in Italy, the mint of their policies, which they have, to my knowledge, made great use of in these kingdoms, and some neighbour nations: * “The particular ways (saith he) they have to ravish all affections, and to fit each humour—are well nigh infinite; there being not anything either sacred or profane, no virtue or vice almost, nothing of how contrary condition soever, which they make not in some sort to serve that turn; that each fancy might be satisfied, and each appetite find what to feed on; whatsoever either wealth can sway with the lovers, or voluntary poverty with the despisers of the world; what honour with the ambitious; what obedience with the humble; what great employment with stirring and metalled spirits; what perpetual quiet with heavy and restive bodies; what content and pleasant nature can take in pastimes and jollity; what contrariwise the austere mind in discipline and rigour; what love either chastity can raise in the pure, or voluptuousness in the dissolute; what allurements are in knowledge to draw the contemplative, or in actions of state to possess the practick dispositions; what with the hopeful, prerogative of reward can work; what errors, doubts and dangers with the fearful; what change of vows with the rash, of estate with the inconstant; what pardons with the faulty, or supplies with the defective; what miracles with the credulous; what visions with the fantastical; what gorgeousness of shows with the vulgar and simple; what multitude of ceremonies with the superstitious and ignorant; what prayers with the devout; what with the charitable, works of piety; what rules of higher perfection with elevated affections; what dispensing with breach of all rules with men of lawless conditions.” And so he goes on to shew how the very constitution of their Church is made up of such contrariety; which I shall insist farther on in another place, my business here being to shew how they are prepared to fit each temper and inclination, with suitable discourses and allurements. They know the greatest part of men in the world are either very much taken with gaudy and pompous sights, which bewitch

* *Europæ Speculum*, p. 37, 38. [Lond. 1687.]

their senses, and so wholly possess them, as to take away all room for rational reflections ; or so charmed with the delights of their beloved corruptions, that they are unwilling to part with them.

To catch the first sort, we find them boasting of the splendour and outward glory of the Church of Rome, to such a degree that they have made this* pomp a mark of the true Church ; this is observed by an ingenious author of their own communion : that† “they insist much upon the fine churches they have at Rome, whose admirable structure doth greatly edify believers, and as Cardinal Pallavicini says (lib. 8. c. 17.) is of itself capable to convert infidel princes ;” this way of catching people by gaudy shows, and splendid sights, is looked on with such a favourable eye among them, that the three bishops‡ from Bononia in a letter of advice to Pope Julius III. observe that “the vulgar are given to admire and to be amused with these things, in the contemplation of which their minds are as it were so entangled, that they have no relish for any other food ; no inclination to any other doctrine :” they affirm that “they were designed for that purpose,” and therefore gave it as “their judgment that they should be augmented and multiplied : for (say they) if the introducing and appointing those few which we have mentioned, were of such use to the settlement of your kingdom, of what advantage would it be were there some new ones added ?” And this advice was so exactly observed, that the excellent Richerius, a doctor of the Sorbon, tells us, that§ “this was the scope and design of the reformation established by the *Trent Council*, nothing being effected for the truth but external pomp provided for ; so that innumerable splendid, gaudy ceremonies were daily invented ; whence proceeded a magnificent and theatrical way of adorning their churches, the sacerdotal ornaments glittering with gold and silver, while the priests who wore them were mere stocks ; by which artifices the people’s minds were amused and insensibly drawn from the consideration of the necessity of reformation :” which made

* Bellar. lib. de Not. Eccl. c. 18.

† Sure and Honest Means for the Conversion of Heretics, p. 110. Lond. 4to. 1687.

‡ See their Letter at large in Vergerius ; and lately in English, intituled, The State of the Church of Rome, before the Reformation, 4to. 1687.

§ Richer. Histor. Concil. Gen. l. 4. par. 2. p. 246, 247. Colon. 1683, 8vo.

the learned Andreas Masius* complain, that “piety was extinguished and discipline neglected, while all applications were made, and inventions used to increase their pomp.” The glittering gold in their temples, and curious images of saints and angels, the numerous and stately altars, the mighty silver statues, the rich and glorious vestments you see up and down in their churches, strike the senses into a kind of ecstasy ; which they are so sensible of, that with all their rhetoric, they enlarge upon this subject, striving to persuade their intended proselytes to see with what magnificence they perform their worship. Thus when his Majesty of blessed memory,† King Charles I. being then prince, was in the Spanish Court, there were great sums expended in solemn glittering processions, and their churches set out with their richest ornaments, to charm his senses ; but he was too well grounded in his religion to be caught by that bait : and I remember that is given by‡ Capt. Robert Everard, as a motive to his conversion, as he calls it, to the Roman Church. The great use they make of it, inclines me to believe this device is accompanied with more than ordinary success ; it is also so universal, that in the Indies they have these pageants, to delight the senses and fancies of the Indians :§ against Christmas Day, they set up a thatched house like a stall in some corner of their churches, with a blazing star over it, pointing to the three wise men from the East ; within this stall they lay a crib, and the image of a child,|| the Virgin Mary standing on one side, and Joseph on the other ; there is likewise an ass and an ox, the three wise men kneel and offer their gifts, the shepherds stand aloof off with theirs, and the angels hang about the stall, with several instruments of music ; and there is scarce an Indian that cometh not to see this Bethlehem, as we are assured by one who was a friar, and dwelt in those parts above twelve years ; who gives several other instances of the same nature.

I have frequently been answered by their converts (when desiring to know what they found amiss in our Church) that

* Apud Richer. ubi sup.

† Rushw. Collect. par. 1. p. 83. fol. Lond. 1659.

‡ In his Epistle to the Nonconformists, 1664, 8vo.

§ Gage's New Survey of the West Indies, p. 152. edit. Lond. 1655, fol.

|| Ogilby in his History of Japan, Edit. Lond. 1670, p. 242, 246, 247, &c. gives an account of the same method used by the Missionaries in that country.

we did nothing to keep up the remembrance of our Saviour, which they were at the greatest charges to effect : and I have received a relation from a gentleman very conversant among them, which for several reasons I think worth inserting.

This gentleman in his travels being at Brussels in the Low Countries, was often invited by the priests there to their churches and convents : after some time spent in debating points in difference between the two Churches, they finding no probability of his conversion, one day told him, "there would be a great ceremony at such a Church the Friday following (being Good Friday), at which they desired he would be present," one of them adding, "that he thought the sight of it alone was enough to convert any heretic ; and instanced in one or two persons on whom it had a very powerful effect : " according to their desire the gentleman went, and by the motion he felt in himself (the representation being so lively that it melted him into tears), doth profess, "he believes the weaker sort of men, who are not very well grounded in their religion, may be strangely altered by such a sight ; though upon deliberation he found it so gross a piece of idolatry, that it created in him a greater detestation of the religion of the Church of Rome than he had before." It being never that I know of related by any author, I believe it will be very acceptable to the reader to have an account of it.

"At the upper end of the church there is a large stage erected, in the midst of which is set up a cross, on which is nailed an image of our Saviour (given as they say by the Infanta Isabella) made of pasteboard, but exactly to the life, having joints, and the veins appearing as full of blood ; it is crowned with thorns, and hangs in the posture of a crucified person ; on one side stands the image of the blessed Virgin, all in mourning, and on the other, a coffin to lay the image in. After the sermon (the Governor and most of the nobility being present), there come forth six friars bare-foot in their stoles, who fall prostrate before the image, frequently beating their breasts, lifting up their heads, and looking on it with all the signs of grief and adoration ; then rising by degrees, two of them remain kneeling, each holding an end of a large swathe which is put under the arms of the image ; two standing under the image to receive it, and the other two ascending two ladders which are placed at the back of the cross ; when one, with a great deal of reverence, taking off the

crown of thorns, wipes it, and descending, brings it to the front of the stage, where shewing it to the people, they all kneel with much devotion, then approaching the image of the Virgin, he falls on his knees and lays it at her feet; then returning up the ladder, they with a great noise and knocking take out one of the nails, upon which the arm of the image falls, exactly like the arm of a dead man: this nail he carries to the people, who, as before, prostrate themselves, and he with the same gesture presents it to the Virgin; after which the other nails are shewn and presented: the body being taken down, and brought by them with a slow pace, and mournful look to the people, they adore again, when the friars upon their knees present it to the Virgin, and with much ceremony lay it in a glass coffin, in which it is carried round the town, the several orders (the Carthusians and Jesuits excepted, who attend at no procession) with lighted candles preceding, the Governor of the Netherlands, and the nobility following bare-headed: what they did afterwards the gentleman saw not."

Thus have the Romanists brought the most gross pageantry into their Church to be motives to their religion, not considering that the heathens of Japan and China, and the inhabitants of America, whose images and the inside of their temples are all of massive gold, have in this respect a fairer title to be the true Church than they; from whence the heathens of old cannot be excluded (if pomp, as Bellarmine and others teach, be a mark of the true Church), seeing their ceremonies and rites of this nature are copied from them, as is confessed by Cardinal Baronius,* that the offices of pagan superstition were purposely introduced and consecrated to the service of God (as he calls it) and true religion. And yet by this very method they gain so much, that † a diligent observer of them before cited, affirms, "that were it not that the music, perfumes, and rich sights, did hold the outward senses with their natural delight; surely their worship could not but either be abandoned for the fruitlessness, or only upon fear and constraint frequented."

And in this particular they have their several baits according to the several dispositions of men; for the more refined

* Ad ann. 200. sect. 5. Consulto introductum videtur, ut quæ erant gentilitiæ superstitionis officia, eadem veri Dei cultui sanctificata in veræ religionis cultum impenderentur. [vol. 2. p. 384. col. 1. Luc. 1738.]

† Europæ Speculum, p. 8. Lond. 1687, 8vo.

sort of those who are caught with these glorious and splendid sights, they have such representations as I have mentioned; but for the less discerning, they are (like their similitudes) so gross, that in a person of a very moderate understanding, they are fitter to excite a loathing and contempt than admiration; for what other effect can proceed from such a picture, as that over the altar at Worms, which one would think was invented by the enemies of Transubstantiation,* to make it appear ridiculous? "There is a windmill, and the Virgin throws Christ into the hopper, and he comes out at the eye of the mill all in wafers, which some priests take up and give to the people. But notwithstanding the coarseness of this emblem, it is so agreeable to the genius of the German boors, that it is to this day over one of their altars there."

This practice of theirs, in which they place so much confidence, and to which they are beholden for much of their success, is so far from being warrantable, that it is directly contrary to the design of the Gospel, whose simplicity is such, as that it needs none of these gew-gaws to support it, and therefore was spread by the first planters of it without them: Saint Paul was so far from making use of such vanities, that he durst not use the enticing words of man's wisdom in his sermons and exhortations;† which surely is much more tolerable, than to endeavour to gain men to the true religion, by bewitching them with those sensual objects, which the design of Christianity is to wean them from; and certainly when we are cautioned not to be like ‡ children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, through the sleight of men; there is a particular caution included therein against suffering such vain shows and gaudy pomps to make impression on us, which are the peculiar delights of children, and must needs argue us very much § children in understanding and religion, to be enticed by them.

The truth of this is so clear, that those among the Romanists, who endeavour to fix in their minds a right idea of Christianity, remembering that the Founder of it said, "His kingdom was not of this world," conceive such an indignation against these carnal and vain methods, that one of them doth not stick to say,|| "that if any man be converted by these,

* Burnet's Letters of his Travels, p. 287, 288. Edit. Rotterd. 1687, 8vo.

† 1 Cor. ii. 4. 5.

‡ Ephes. iv. 14.

§ 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

|| Sure and Honest Means for the Converting Heretics, p. 110. [Lond. 1687.]

he is a fool ;” and assures us, “that he knows that upon people of understanding, who apply themselves to solid things, and grow in spirit and truth, this hath a contrary effect, for these things do debauch the mind, and set it on wandering. The inquiry,” continues he, “is about seeking God, and finding him in those places ; and it is not the sight of the fine gilding, or the excellent painting of an edifice, nor the hearing of a sweet harmony, but rather the lifting up of our minds above sensible objects, and separating them as much as we possibly can from sense and imagination : it is the fixing the eyes of our understanding with a religious attention upon that invisible Spirit, upon that Sun of justice ; and when we do it with the love and reverence that is due to it, we shall never fail of seeing and hearing the most delightful things.” And then he goes on to lay down reasons why we ought not to be wrought upon by such external things : “The Fathers,” saith he, “were of opinion that Antichrist should one day seize upon the most magnificent temples of the Christians :”^{*} this was the opinion of St. Hilary, and of St. Jerome ; this last mentions the very rock of Tarpeius. “Therefore the Popes ought not to glory over-much in their buildings, since Antichrist shall one day place himself in them.—I like well enough to see such fine things as these, but I confess that I have more devotion in a little church without magnificence or rich ornaments, than I have in such places. I find that my devotion does insensibly divide, and that sense sometimes doth carry away a part of my mind, and transport it to sensible objects which do not deserve it, and that my affection is thereby weakened, whatever care I take to gather it up and unite it. This hath a much more dangerous effect upon the common people, who have no knowledge, and whose religion lies only in their eyes and ears, they do in a horrible manner fasten on these things, which are only obvious to their sense, and go no higher.”

And shall these things which the sober Romanists themselves confess to be an hindrance of piety, destructive to devotion, and fit to prevail upon none but fools, be the motives to rational men to leave the pure worship of God, to have their eyes delighted by gaudy shows, and their ears pleased with all sorts of music ? I doubt not but the doctrine of ecstacies and

^{*} Ibid. p. 111. For this he cites Hil. contr. Auxentium. et Hieron. ad Marcellam viduam.

raptures, so highly applauded in the Romish Church, hath its greatest support from these external glories, which are proper to raise the affections to such a pleasing height, as renders them almost insensible ; which though only the effect of the pleasure the senses are entertained with, are by them extolled as holy motions and divine illuminations, while the soul is not at all affected, or bettered by such transports.

There lies therefore an indispensable obligation upon every person, but especially upon such as by their natural dispositions are apt to be affected by such things, to keep a constant and severe watch over their affections, that they do not blind their understandings ; remembering religion consists in the understanding and will being rightly informed and directed ; not in the motion of the spirit and tickling of the senses ; the doctrine of the Gospel being designed for the good of souls, never an article of it calculated to gratify and please the flesh. Besides, how unreasonable is it that those things which Antichrist shall boast of, and pride himself in, should be ever used as an argument to proselyte any to a party ? As if they must needs be the only true Church, because in this they resemble Antichrist. If men would but seriously reflect, it is an easy matter to perceive even from hence, that what I noted in the Introduction, of their designs, is true ; for what do all these glorious shows tend to the making a man wise unto salvation, or the fitting him for the enjoyment of God ? All the tendency they can have is, to work upon men's affections, which I before observed, is their main design. Now we know that such emotions are seldom permanent, which made the excellent Richerius,* speaking of these things (though himself a Papist), affirm, "That those who thought these methods would be long of force, will in a little time find themselves mightily deceived." And this is not unknown to the missionaries, who therefore strike while the iron continues hot, and ply the person whose affections are thus raised, with their miracles, their holiness, and such particulars, which we shall discourse of anon.

And I cannot think it one of the least weighty considerations, to deter men from being gulled by such trifles, to reflect that these things are designed either for such as have no real sense of religion, or to bring them to have none ; the first sort being very glad of such a worship as gratifies their voluptuous

* Lib. 4. Part. 2. p. 246. [ut supra.]

humours ; and others more soberly inclined, are thereby taught to worship God wholly in a sensual manner, and so estranged from the pure and spiritual part of religion, which God alone delights in.

Neither is this method only calculated for such, but they have likewise a singular dexterity in accommodating themselves even to the vices and corruptions they find men most addicted to ; if ambitious, they endeavour to feed that humour ; if voluptuous, to gratify them in that ; if revengeful, they permit them to follow their inclinations ; if covetous, (though of all vices, they are most enraged against that) yet, for a while, they can find a way, not to be grievous to them, and as pliable they are to the prodigal. This is an observation made of the Jesuits by several Doctors of the Sorbonne in Paris :* “ They speak of nothing but magnificence and liberality to those who are vain ; telling them, that by these actions they establish their reputation ; and the more to puff them up with such conceits, they cite examples to that purpose.” Nay, lest they should be terrified with the torments of purgatory after this life,† Bellarmine affirms, “ that in probability there is a purgatory, where those pains are not endured ;” which is seconded by many of their divines, who, together with Bellarmine, found it upon revelations made to venerable Bede, and others : and Aquila‡ expressly and purposely defends this opinion ; and lest they should grow cold, considering that they must not meet with sensual joys in heaven, all the happiness of the blessed spirits consisting in the vision of God, which these voluptuous men cannot apprehend any great delight in, they have therefore coined a new description of that happy place ;§ affirming that “ there shall be a sovereign pleasure in kissing and embracing the bodies of the blessed ; that the angels shall put on women’s habits, and appear to the saints in the dress of ladies ; that women shall rise with long hair, and appear with ribbons and laces as they do upon earth ; that married people shall kiss one another, and their children as in this life.” Thus these subtle

* Moral Practice of the Jesuits, p. 384. Lond. 1670. 8vo.

† Lib. 2. de Purg. c. 7.

‡ Moral Practice of the Jesuits, p. 386. [Lond. 1670.]

§ Ibid. p. 388, 389. Note, that this Book entitled, *The Business of the Saints in Heaven*, was written by F. L. Henriquez, approved by Fr. Prado, Provincial of Castile, April 28, 1631, and allowed of by Order of the General of the Jesuits. Mutius Vitelleschi.

deceivers will rather follow Mahomet's steps in asserting a sensual paradise, than lose one of their proselytes.

I neither design here to enlarge upon this subject, nor pretend to instance in all their turnings and artifices to this end: the first, because I refer it to another head, when I come to treat of their disguising and varying their doctrine; the latter, because I cannot pretend to do it, their arts being numberless; but by such instances as these are, the reader may easily discover them, when they act a part of the same nature.

In Christmas, A.D. 1624, one Father Leech told Mr. F. Gee,* "that if any but hear mass, and after hearing be sprinkled with holy water, and kiss the priest's garments, he could not commit that day any mortal sin, though he would never so fain; and my author cites in the margin, some authors† who teach the same;" an excellent maxim to make the greatest sin become none at all, and very much akin to that, that God sees no sin in his children.

This suiting themselves to the carnal desires of men, is so usual among them, that one of their own authors‡ could not forbear making this observation: "Do not you hear them how they speak plausibly to itching ears, altering, fashioning and re-fashioning their religion; according to the will and wantonness of them whose glory, next unto their own, they prefer before the glory of God?"

This prostituting the holy name of Christianity to serve the interest of a party, and making that God, in whom is no variableness, and who is infinitely holy, to be the author of such contrary and wicked doctrines, is in itself so odious, and doth at first sight appear so unworthy, that I think it needless to make any reflections on it.

I shall close this chapter with some reflections upon what I mentioned in the beginning, their great pretences of zeal for the good of souls, after I have briefly mentioned their remaining arts, which they practise in their first address; in endeavouring

* Gee's Foot out of the Snare, p. 13, 4to. Lond. 1624.

† Barst. in lib. instit. The Propitiator, p. 74 vid. Fitz-sim. in fin. citat. in divers. loc.

‡ Ebber. in præf. in com. Philip. super. Christ. ad Cor. cited by Mr. Gee, [Ibid.] p. 17. thus, An non audis dicentes grata multitudini, flectentes, fingentes, ac refringentes, religionem ad nutum et cupiditates Dominorum et coetuum, quorum gloriam nisi suam pluris faciunt quam gloriam Dei?

to discover the capacities of those they deal with, that if they be of slow and heavy understandings, they may deal with them as with such, where arguments of the nature of that emblem before-mentioned of Christ thrown into the hopper, will be most proper: if they discover quick and sprightly parts, all the ingenious reflections upon the Protestants, that they can call to mind, are with a pleasant smile cast out, and they endeavour with all manner of address to render their company acceptable and diverting; and when they have thus ingratiated themselves, if you speak of any of our books or divines, they will with a slighting accent tell you, they are not worth their minding: "as I remember, objecting a passage out of Dr. Stillingfleet against Idolatry, to one of them; he replied, he mistook the question so, that he had no patience to read him;" though another went further, "affirming that he was either a knave or a dunce." Thus the author of the Request to Protestants, begins with such a magisterial sentence against his Answerer;* that "he concluded it a pamphlet unworthy of special notice, and expected, if not more pertinent, yet at least more plausible replies, except Protestants meant their profession should be exposed by silence, or a silly defence, and for the future esteemed destitute of any divine evidence;" though what little reason he had to say so, the world hath since seen, and I dare appeal to any impartial person on their own side, whether there be not more of affected scorn than truth in that fine speech. Nay, they will not only make the world believe that they despise us, but will express their contempt even in the most unhandsome language,† as Dr. Ruze, though a Frenchman, and at Paris when the ministers, Monsieur de Spina, and Monsieur Barbaste, minister to the Queen of Navarre, desired liberty to pray before they began the conference, which was then to be held in the house of the Duke de Montpensier, told them, that if they would go pray, he would go to piss during the time of prayer.

I cannot here forbear anticipating the next chapter, by desiring the reader that whenever he meets with such carriage, he would make it rather a subject for his laughter, than his

* Protestancy destitute of Scripture Proofs, p. 1. 4to. 1687.

† Acts of the Conf. at Paris, in July and August. Ann. 1566, in the preface, p. 8. 4to. Lond. 1602. This Conference was printed the same year, 1566, in French with this title, Conference entre deux Docteurs de Sorbonne, et deux Ministres de l'Eglise reformee, 8vo.

serious thoughts ; and in the following chapter I shall give him some reason for it ; and I desire he would take this as a maxim, to suspect everything they say ; a maxim very necessary to be observed, as an antidote against their great design in the beginning of a proselyting intrigue ; for I durst venture any person among all their reasons, if this insinuating way of engaging men's affections were laid aside.

If men would learn to love those who are of another profession, while they hate their errors and superstitions, we might hope to see again the primitive charity restored ; and therefore notwithstanding the bitterness of Roman spirits, and their greatest kindnesses carrying a design in them, it is our duty to love their persons, especially those who by particular obligations deserve it ; I know it is an usual way among them to inquire into the wants and conditions of others, and they know where to get money to supply them, and are ready with all officiousness to assist and oblige their acquaintance, especially those they are tampering with ; and though we see through these artifices, yet we are bound to be ready to do the same, or greater kindnesses for them if we are able ; but on the other side our just respect for them ought not to lessen our love to truth, or make us less diligent in searching after it ; neither ought we to have such an opinion of them as to have a less esteem for our religion : to suffer that, would be to love them more than God, and to concur with them to our own deceiving in such unworthy actions, as an honest heathen would be ashamed of. I know they have made several converts by this one artifice ; “they will go to a person whom they know to be under straits, and among other arguments, insist on the want of charity in our Church, and advise them to go to some of our ministers and see what they will do for them ; upon this some of them have come to some divines whom I could name, and that very lately, complaining of their wants, and that there is no provision made for them, relating what proffers they have from the gentlemen of the Church of Rome, if they will be of that Church.” Now for a minister to maintain these people is impossible ; all that he can do being to give them some present relief ; this the priests make their advantage of, remonstrating how true it is, that as they affirmed, our Church is void of charity ; which so abounds in theirs, that if they will be reconciled, they shall have a plentiful allowance ; which gilded bait hath been greedily swallowed by too many. I cannot say that they have kept their words

with none, but I know there are several whom they have gained by this means, who being once made sure by the oath* which they make them take, have their allowances taken off, under pretence that the stock is exhausted by the multitude of converts, and they are able to continue it no longer.

From several instances which may be produced of this kind, it were an easy matter to form very strong arguments against too much credulity; but our holy religion needing no worldly consideration to uphold it, I shall only reason from the weakness of a change which is begun to be effected by such an artifice; it being one of the most heinous sins to choose a religion for profit's sake, and incompatible with true holiness. Seeing worldly gains are so far from being permitted to have any force in a soul endued with that, that the being Christ's disciple infers a renunciation of them all; from whence I may draw another proof; "that the design of those gentlemen is not to inform men's understandings, but so they get them to their side, they have their end;" but this I refer to the Second Part, where I design to treat more particularly of this method.

There is yet another effect which the readiness of the missionaries to oblige those they deal with, is designed to produce, the creating such a good opinion of them, as shall incline men to be guided by their directions: this I mentioned before, but choose to insist upon it here, because it is usually furthered by the opinion of zeal and love to souls, which by their words and gestures they endeavour to drive the people into a belief of.

But here it is to be considered, that a fair carriage is not the sign of a messenger of truth, but may be and is found in deceivers and false prophets;† our Saviour having long since told us that false prophets come in sheep's clothing; and the great Apostle of the Gentiles informs us, that with good words,‡ and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple; and therefore is the more earnest with the Colossians,§ because he knew deceivers would use enticing words; such going about

* See the Oath in the Pontifical, Edit. Colon. 1682, p. 450, 451, 8vo. Where, after they have professed obedience to the Pope, they go on thus, *Jurans dico per Deum Omnipotentem, et sancta Dei Evangelia, me in unitate et communione præmissis inconcusse mansurum. Et si (quod absit) ab hac me unitate aliqua occasione vel argumento divisero, perjuri reatum incurrens æternæ obligatus poenæ inveniari, et cum auctore schismatis habeam in futuro sæculo portionem.*

† Matt. vii. 15.

‡ Rom. xvi. 18.

§ Col. ii. 4.

for that end who have a form* of godliness though not the power; and for these who go about in the name of Christ to promote their own ends, with words† smoother than butter; our Saviour, when he told us of them, gave us likewise a rule how to deal with them,‡ “ye shall know them by their fruits,” not by their outward actions, for none are more outwardly strict than deceivers, but by their doctrines; if they be not of God, all the rest is but sheep’s clothing, but pretence to innocency and sincerity when the essence of it is wanting; that sheep’s clothing being expounded by the Romanists themselves to imply§ an affected simplicity and sincerity,|| enticing words, and specious works. Now for any man to be caught with these which are the special properties of false prophets and deceivers, would appear incredible, if experience did not shew how little the cautions of our Saviour are reflected on, which renders such weak persons the less capable of excuse, because though they were warned of this snare, they would not avoid it.

This show of zeal and piety, we are told “by the Jesuit Acosta,¶ will be industriously affected by the messengers of Antichrist, whereby,” he says, “they will ensnare many heedless and unthinking souls;” which makes that caution of the wise man absolutely necessary to be reflected on, and diligently observed, “when he speaketh fair, believe him not;**” for if the antichristian emissaries shall bid as fair for the good opinion of men by such specious pretences, how great an indifference ought every one to preserve for all persons, till they see their fruits?” This is equally the duty of all sides, neither can we be too suspicious in matters of our eternal concern, where nothing but evident proof from divine authority should prevail with us. For in obedience to the command of St. John,†† to try the spirits whether they are of God, it is our business to receive no doctrine till it is confirmed by the Word of God; this suspicion and caution is recommended to us by the great champion of the Romanists at Oxford, so that all

* 2 Tim. iii. 5. † Psal. lv. 21. ‡ Matth. vii. 16.

§ Lucas Brugensis in loc. Edit. Antwerp, 1606.

|| Maldonate in loc. Edit. Mogunt. 1624.

¶ Joseph. Acosta de Noviss. tempor. l. 2. c. 20. Edit. Lugd. 1592. 8vo. Ad signorum magnitudinem accedet apta et composita ad decipiendum sanctitatis simulatio, qua solet (sc. Antichristus) homines parum cautos externa specie vehementer allicere.

** Prov. xxvi. 25.

†† 1 John iv. 1.

reason concurs to excite us to that diligence, for which the Apostle Paul so highly commends the inhabitants of Berea,* “that they would not believe what he taught, till by searching the Scriptures they found he agreed with them.” I know indeed the gentlemen of the Church of Rome will not allow such a search, but the aforesaid author† expressly affirms, “that when new doctrines come into the world, Christians are desired to try such doctrines whether they be of God,” which is all I at present plead for.

If I should urge to this end, the same reason which Solomon does, where he gives this advice;‡ “He that hateth, dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him; when he speaketh fair, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart;” I could find several instances given by their own divines to justify such a caution; but because this chapter is lengthened beyond what I at first intended, I shall remit them to another place, and mention only the instance of Mr. Parsons, the famous writer against King James’s succession to the Crown, and in defence of the Pope’s deposing power; of whom several§ French divines observe; “that no man’s writings are fuller of spite than his. But it is mixed with such floods of crocodile’s tears, when he is most spiteful, that he then always pretends so much charity and tenderness, as if every hard word he uses went to his very heart; by which the simpler sort are greatly blinded.” Nay, they are so used to this pretence of love to souls, that in the Inquisition, when they are tormenting a heretic, as they call him, with the greatest torments, they pretend all is out of love to his soul; though all the world knows, “that tortures make no real converts; and consequently, seeing they can have no effect upon the soul, they can do that no good.”

I know it is very hard for one whose disposition is ingenuous, to guard himself from such insinuations, and therefore have been the more prolix, in setting forth the command of our Saviour, and the necessity of being very watchful over ourselves, lest out of a piece of good nature we throw away our souls, and make shipwreck of the faith. Let us endeavour to have a real love for them, and our desires for their salvation

* Act. xvii. 10, 11.

† Considerations on the Spirit of Martin Luther, p. 2. Oxford, 1687, 4to.

‡ Prov. xxvi. 24, 25.

§ Jesuits’ Catechism, Pref. p. 9. Edit. 1604, 4to.

will be sincere and fervent ; but till they can shew us a Church that doth more sincerely advance the great ends of holiness and piety, let us hold fast the profession of our* faith without wavering ; and not throw away ourselves out of love to others, as those unfortunate gentlemen,† who purely out of love to Catesby, became partakers of his guilt in the Gunpowder treason, and so lost their fames, their lives, and greatly hazarded their souls.

CHAP. II.

OF THEIR STRANGE CONFIDENCE IN ASSERTING ANY THING,
THAT MAY TEND TO THEIR ADVANTAGE.

To strengthen that advice with which I concluded the former chapter, it is an excellent observation, no less true than ingenious, made by an eminent divine‡ who lived seventeen years abroad among the Romanists,§ “ that the proper genius, and as it were the universal spirit of that Church consists much in a confidence to raise any thing which they have, although that were but a dunghill, into a castle, and by the noise of strange expressions to persuade you out of your own knowledge, that you may believe the enchantment. Transubstantiation, &c. had been as soon tumbled down as started up, had they not been kept on foot by this kind of Roman hectoring.”

Which is so fit a name for their carriage, that there are no men in the world to whom the appellation of spiritual hectors so properly belongs, as to these gentlemen ; all the brags, fained stories, huffing expressions, confident assertions, and supercilious looks, which are the very constituent qualities of those we call hectors, are so exactly copied by these men, that an indifferent person would be ready to conclude the difference to be very small, if any.

They do with much unconcernedness insist upon the com-

* Heb. x. 23.

† Mr. Rockwood and Sir Everard Digby. See the Gunpowder-treason, with a Discourse of the manner of its discovery, p. 125, 127, Lond. 1679, 8vo.

‡ Dr. Brevint. Saul and Samuel at Endor. Pref. p. 5. Oxford, 1674, 4to.

§ Ibid. p. 3.

mon arguments of their predecessors, without taking the least notice of the answers which have been made to them, yea, reiterate the very same objections to the same person who has answered them before; like flies, which although you drive them away, will still return and never cease to trouble you; so these men, after you have refuted all their objections, they come to you again and produce the same things, as if they were new: and as flies bring others with them, and altogether make one and the same buzzing; so when you can suffer these people no longer, they send you their emissaries and disciples, you see many new faces, but you hear still the same song, and see them go round the same circle; insomuch that* Monsieur Drelincourt professes that one certain objection hath been made him, and refuted above an hundred times.

This excellent method our present controvertists are so fond of, that they do not scruple to propose objections *verbatim* out of authors who have not only been several times refuted, but convicted of the greatest insincerity and wilful forgery: the author of the fifth part of Church-government† hath copied out of Sanders, who not only reviles our princes with all the bitter words of an overflowing gall, and died in open rebellion; but hath been often refuted, and convinced of forgery by several, and particularly by Dr. Burnet in his History of the Reformation from public records; and in pleading against our ordination, hath brought no arguments, but such as were distinctly replied to by Archbishop Bramhall,‡ Mr. Mason,§ and Dr. G. Burnet;|| the two first long since, and the last very lately; “transcribing,” as the learned reflector observes, “not only the matter, but the very form of those arguments which have been so often confuted.”

And the collector of (that book so much admired among them, and recommended at this day by no less a person than the vindicator of the Bishop of Condom¶) the Nubes Testium hath exactly transcribed that notorious plagiarist Alexander

* Delincourt's Protestant's Self-Defence, in the Preface, Lond. 1685, 12s.

† Oxford, 1687, 4to.

‡ In his Consecration of Protestant Bishops vindicated, in the first tome of his works, Dublin, 1676, fol. and in tom. 4.

§ Vind. Eccles. Ang. Lond. 1625, fol.

|| In his History of the Reformation, Lond. 1679, fol. and his Vindication of the Ordination of the Church of England, Lond. 1677, 8vo.

¶ Reply to the Defence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, p. 3. of the Preface, Lond. 1687, 4to.

Natalis, whose wretched falsifications have been several times exposed, and particularly in the point of images by Spanhemius,* to say nothing of our own divines; and yet this disturber of antiquity copies even his very forgeries, without the least notice of the little credit he is of among the Romanists themselves.

If at any time they apprehend a rub in their way, either from any doctrine or practice of their own, or any passage of the ancient Fathers, it is almost incredible with what prodigious assurance they will deny it. Wherein they have an excellent example set them by the Bishop of Meaux, who, writing to the new converts of his diocese, very gravely tells them,† *“that not one of them hath suffered violence, either in his person or goods: so far have you been,”* saith he, *“from suffering torments, that you have not so much as heard them mentioned: I hear other bishops affirm the same; but for you, my brethren, I say nothing to you, but what you may speak as well as I; you are returned peaceably to us, you know it.”* This strange assertion coming from a person of his character, was received at Paris with such surprise, that men began presently to believe he would strike it out of the next edition; so that the author of the “Republique des Lettres”‡ was inclinable to credit that report, because men of sense would complain in their minds to be thus eternally wearied with these pretences, that the Huguenots signed the formulary with all the readiness in the world; but instead of that, in his letter of May the 13th, this present year, he confirms that bold passage with a solemn protestation, in the presence of God, who is to judge the quick and dead, that he spoke nothing but the truth, and that he never designed to expunge that clause.§ It is not without a

* Spanhemii *Histor. Imaginum*, Lugd. Batav. 1686, 8vo.

† Bishop of Meaux's Pastoral Letter, p. 3, 4. Lond. 1686, 4to.

‡ Nouvelle de la Republique des Lettres, Juin, 1686. p. 736. Il est apparent que M. de Meaux retranchera l'endroit cidessus marqué, et que les gens d'honneur se plaindront in petto de ce qu'on se tue de leur soutenir que les Huguenots ont signé le formulaire le plus volontairement du monde.

§ On parle encore dans cette cinquieme objection de ce que j'ay dit dans ma Lettre Pastorale touchant ce qui c'est passé dans la diocese de Meaux, et dans plusieurs autres, dont les evesques, mes confrères et mes amis, n'avoient sait le recit; et moy je persist à dire, sous les yieux de Dieu, qui jugera les vivans et les morts, que je n'ay rien dit que de veritable; et que l'auteur de la Republique des Lettres avoit rezen un mauvais memoire, quand il a dit que je retrancherois cet article dans les editions

sensible regret that I relate this passage ; but when a person of his quality and refined wit shall, with so great solemnity, impose upon the world, wherein so many thousands can convince him of imposture, and call God to witness to so notorious an untruth, we may well expect to meet with very little sincerity from others, who are so great admirers of this Bishop. It is a very true and just remark made by a late author,* “that his Majesty’s brief alone may serve for a confutation of so shameful an assertion, and shew us how little we can rely upon these gentlemen, when they talk to us of things that were done twelve or fourteen years ago, that make no scruple of dealing thus with us in a matter of fact, in the sight of the world, before whose eyes these things are acted :” to which I may add the witness all countries can bear to the contrary, where multitudes of these poor distressed, persecuted Christians have taken sanctuary. But for the particular matters of fact in that prelate’s diocese, my author informs us,† “that, as far as he can learn, the dragoons (by whom they make their proselytes) were not lodged in the bishopric of Meaux, but they came up to the very gates of the city. Being thus in sight of their danger, and expecting every minute that it would fall upon them, the Bishop thought that certainly now, if ever, they would be disposed to a compliance (so that, though not tortured, they were frightened into it). With this advantage he invites them to a conference, appears more moderate than even his own Exposition, and desires very little more of them than what any one might venture to subscribe. Such advances, backed with the terrors of the dragoons at the gates, prevailed upon them ; upon which the dragoons were dismissed. How this agrees with not so much as hearing violences mentioned, and returning peaceably, is only for them to make out who are so good at reconciling contradictions ; especially if we look on his carriage afterwards, when he actually proceeded to mention violence,‡ for he threatened those that would not come, and quartered the dragoons upon the obstinate, and particularly on Monsieur de Seguier, cousin to the late Chancellor of that name, who are to this day prisoners on that account.” Nay,

suivantes, puisque, je n’y ay pas seulment songe.—Reply to the Defence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, p. 181. [Lond. 1687.]

* Present State of the Controversy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, p. 22. Lond. 1687, 4to.

† Ibid. p. 22, 23, 24.

‡ Ibid. p. 23.

this same gentleman, who so gravely tells us he heard the same from other bishops, *viz.* that there was no force used, did, in a letter dated but a few days after that,* wherein he denies any violence to be used to the Protestants, both own and justify the persecution to a person of quality who had escaped out of France, and he desired to reclaim; which kindled such an indignation in that honourable person, that he printed the Bishop's letter to him. And yet can this prelate appeal to God concerning the truth of that which he had contradicted under his own hand!

We need not wonder at his singular dexterity in this matter, seeing it hath been his chief employment as a bishop to make proselytes; and it would be a great wrong to his quick apprehension to suspect his being thoroughly versed in the artifices necessary for accomplishing his end: which is an opinion none that is conversant in his works can well be of,† he having taken so much care to furnish us with instances of his excellency therein. For, being charged, by the learned Expositor of the Doctrine of our Church,‡ with teaching prayers to saints in such a manner as that it was directly contrary to the same doctrine as laid down in Father Crasset's book on that subject, by his letter of April the 6th, 1686,§ affirms, "he never read that Jesuit's discourse, neither ever heard it mentioned that it was contrary to his Exposition;"|| which he again asserts in his letter of May 13th, 1687. Now to prove this of the same stamp with the former passage, the very looking into the Bishop's book of "Communion under one kind,"¶ where he is answering Monsieur Jurieux, who objects that book of Father Crasset against his Lordship, and spends several pages to prove that it plainly contradicts his Exposition, is sufficient. So that, we must either conclude the Bishop answered a book which he never read, or that his protestation, that he never heard there was any thing in that Jesuit's book contrary to his, *must be untrue*; for he could not peruse Monsieur Ju-

* His Pastoral Letter bears date March 24th, and this to the Gentleman, April 4th.

† Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, p. 7, of the Preface, Lond. 1686, 4to.

‡ La veritable devotion envers la St. Vierge, Par. 1679, 4to.

§ Vindication of the Bishop of Condom's Exposition, p. 115. Lond. 1686, 4to.

|| Reply to the Defence, &c. [ut supra], p. 181.

¶ Edit. Par. 1685, 12s.

rieux's discourse without finding the difference insisted on. This was urged against him by his adversary,* but he thinks fit in his Reply to take no notice of it, contenting himself with an unjust reflection upon that French divine, but never offers to weaken this argument, which had been alleged purposely to prove his assertion false, and which will always remain as an unanswerable instance of his insincerity, "unless he fly for refuge to that equivocating shift, that he never *heard* Father Crasset's doctrine was different from his, though he had indeed *read* a discourse which affirmed that it was, which is an excuse fit for such a cause, and the best that it will ever bear."

There seems to be a kind of conspiracy among the French clergy to deny this persecution, or at least to represent it as neither so violent or universal as indeed it is; to which purpose it is affirmed, in a discourse said to be written by order of the clergy, (under this title, "A Letter from a Churchman to a Friend,")† that "there were not forty churches of Protestants demolished in the ten years preceding the year eighty-two," when it is notoriously known, that, in the province of Poitou alone, near that number were pulled down; and the agent of the clergy had the May before said, at the opening of the Assembly, that "the King had demolished an infinite number of them."

But it is not particular actions only which they are so ready to deny and disclaim, but if any authors, whether Fathers or of a later date, of whatsoever kind, be objected to them, they reckon it a good and sufficient answer, either to deny that there are such authors, or that they wrote those books, or that the passages insisted on are to be found in them; or if all these be made too evident to be handsomely denied, they have then some wrested interpretation, which, without any hesitancy, they will offer as the sense of the author they are pressed with.

This liberty of rejecting books when they are pressed with them, is not only practised but defended; Vasquez telling us, "that it is frequent among the Catholics, when they are urged with testimonies out of the Councils or Fathers, to deny that they are theirs, and this," he says, "is the readiest (and often the best) refuge they can find;"‡ and Baronius, being pressed

* Defence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, p. 114. Lond. 1686, 4to.

† See Last Efforts of afflicted Innocency, p. 5, 6. Lond. 1682, 8vo.

‡ De Cultu Adorat. lib. 2. disput. 5. c. 3. Mogunt. 1601, 8vo. Speaking

with a passage out of Clement's Constitutions, answers, "that he might deny the authority of them, which he affirms to be a very justifiable shift."* This is confessed by the authors of the Index Expurgatorius Belgicus to be their usual practice,† and they give directions how to improve it; which the missionaries are very observant of, as the experience of those who converse with them may easily discover.

I remember, when I urged one of them with the novelty of transubstantiation, he told me, "it was so far from being new, that it was never questioned, till Berengarius opposed it." When I desired him to call to mind that Bertram lived some ages before that he mentioned, he replied in a great heat, there was no such man, and turning to the company, desired them to take notice how we coined authors at our pleasure; but when I undertook to justify, both that there was such a writer who opposed their doctrine, and had satisfied those who were present, he had no way to come off but by pretending he mistook the name, but I could not prevail with him to tell who it was he supposed I named. When Campion the Jesuit, who made such a bustle with his brags of challenging the Universities, was pressed with some texts out of the book of Judith, to prove that she was not inspired by God, he confidently affirmed there were no such passages, though it was presently proved they were to be found in the vulgar Latin.‡ And Mr. Clark,§ alleging Tertullian against Hermogenes in defence of the sufficiency of Scripture, Mr. Campion first denied that Tertullian wrote the book, and being convinced of that, without reading the place, he immediately, of his own head, began a discourse of the Father's design therein, as if it were revealed to him by inspiration, for he had just before disclaimed the knowledge of any such piece of Tertullian's; which way of expounding the Fathers and Scripture at random he was so in love with, that, in the last conference, being

of Alanus Copus and Sanders denying the Epistle of Epiphanius to Joh. Hierosol. to be his, saith, *Id commune etiam et frequens effugium esse solet iis qui testimoniis conciliorum, aut Patrum in aliqua controversia nimis premuntur.*

* Ad ann. 32. n. 18, 19.

† In Catholicis veteribus plurimos feramus errores et extenuemus, excusemus, excogitato commento persæpe negemus, et commodum iis sensum affingamus, dum opponuntur in disputationibus, aut in confictionibus cum adversariis. Index expurg. libror. qui hoc seculo prodierunt, Edit. 1586, 12s.

‡ Conference with Campion in the Tower, p. 134. Lond. 1583, 4to.

§ Ibid. 146, 147.

pressed with that passage of our Saviour, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,"* from whence Mr. Clark inferred,† that, as the text of Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt worship no strange gods,"‡ justified our Saviour's adding the word *only*, "him *only* shalt thou serve," so we, by the same warrant and words, do, in the question of justification, take the words *not by works*,§ *not by law*,|| to import as much as *faith only*, for *all works* whatsoever being excluded by these negative speeches, *faith alone* remaineth. To evade this, Mr. Campion, with his usual boldness, replied, "that the word *worship* doth of necessity infer so much, and therefore Christ did well to expound it by *only*." But it was not so in the other instance, where, by endeavouring to outface that argument, he gave up the whole cause of worshipping images and saints, by confessing that *God alone* is to be worshipped.

And the Jesuit Cotton,¶ confessor to Henry the Great of France, when Carolus Scribanus, under the feigned name of Bonarscius, had published his book, wherein he defended the power of the Popes over the lives and temporalities of Kings, finding how ill it was resented at the court of France, confidently asserted, that it was a book written by the heretics, and published only to make the Jesuits odious; and yet the same man, when he had opportunity, highly commended the very same book as very fit for the instruction of youth, and was a means of dispersing many copies of it.

Let the impartial reader but reflect on this carriage which is so universally approved among them, and he will find it was not without reason that I desired of him in the former chapter, *to distrust every thing they say*. It was a habit I was very unwilling to endeavour after, till my experience of their way of writing, and observations of their discourses, convinced me of the absolute necessity, all who deal with them lie under to attain it; for I cannot call to mind any one of their books, nor remember any particular conversation which I have been engaged in with them, wherein I have not met with such

* Ibid. p. 166.

† Matth. iv. 10.

‡ Deut. vi. 14.

§ Rom. ix. 11. Gal. ii. 16.

|| Rom. iii. 21.

¶ Hospin. Histor. Jesuit. p. 222, 223. Edit. Tig. 1670, fol. Pater Cotton tum dixit eum librum nequaquam à suæ societatis hominibus emanasse, sed Genève ad conflandum Jesuitis odium fictum ab hæreticis fuisse. Qui tamen postea, longe aliter, quid sentiret, expressit, laudato Scribanii opere, et distributis multis illius exemplaribus, atque etiam claro admodum viro commendaret eum, tanquam juventuti Latinis literis imbuendæ apprime utile, &c.

shuffling and insincere answers, offered with as grave a countenance, and as much assurance as if there was no juggling at the bottom.

To allege all the instances which the late passages of this nature furnish us with, would be as troublesome to the reader as tedious to me. The Oxford * champion gives Luther the lie for quoting a passage, which though this civil gentleman is pleased to deny it, is in the author he professes to take it from. The late Bishop of Meath† assures us, "There are, who contrary to all evidence, confidently aver, write, and openly proclaim to the world, that there was no rebellion in Ireland in 1641, but they themselves, the *Irish* and *Papists* of Ireland were then the *sufferers*, and the *Protestants* the first *aggressors*, which they back with such confidence, that the bishop assures us it hath already gained great belief with many." An eminent divine, lately discoursing with some of the Roman Church, and producing the Roman Breviary, in confirmation of the point he was insisting on, one of them very confidently told him "that it was forged by the Protestants," and when he offered the Passion-Week, printed in English at Paris, he met with the same answer. And at this day they spread among their people a report, that the reason of the few hardships (for they strive to represent them as few as possible) of the French Protestants is, because they designed to rebel against the king.

It is almost incredible what a multitude of such instances might be given, and as strange that men who pretend to so much religion should be guilty of them; but they find the effects of them so pleasing, that there is no hope they should ever be prevailed on to relinquish these unhandsome methods, and behave themselves with more modesty and respect to truth. For hereby they have so possessed their people with false notions, and filled their heads with such invented stories, that they look upon us as a parcel of men who can neither write nor speak truth; insomuch that "but a few days ago, when I offered to a gentleman of that communion to prove his Church guilty of forging authors, and altering the genuine works of the ancient Fathers and modern divines, he replied, that he was so sure of the contrary, that though I should swear it, he never would believe it true; nay, if I should shew him

* See Answer to the Considerations on the Spirit of Martin Luther, p, 12, 13. Oxford, 1687, 4to.

† See his Letter in the Preface to the History of the Irish Rebellion, Lond. 1680, fol.

the very books, he was sure they must be some of our own making, and therefore would give no credit to them;" just such an encounter* Mr. Crashaw had with some of the same religion upon this subject; when "objecting the *Index Expurgatorius*, they presently replied, that it was never done by the Catholic Church, but it was some trick of Beza or Junius, devised to disgrace the Catholic cause." To justify his accusation he produced Stella on Luke, which was purged, as the title itself "declared, according to the rules of that Index;" they answered, "the title might be put in by some of us in malice, to make the world believe the Romish Church did what they have not done. Nay, when he produced Possevino the Jesuit, affirming that he was so purged, they would not be satisfied, but still declared there was no such thing. And this is the case of many thousands at this day among them."

Neither is this confident trick of asserting whatever they fancy may advance their cause, practised only when they are pressed with an argument or authority; but in their own arguments against us they will not stick to publish the greatest falsities, if it may either create an ill opinion of us, or enhance their people's esteem for them. Their usual entrance is with great boasts of their cause, and that if their enemies dare meet them, the world shall see with how much ease they will baffle all their arguments; though the Jesuit Gontiere† was sadly foiled, when having so far prevailed upon Monsieur Liembrun, that the gentleman had promised to become a Romanist; after a conference which he desired the Jesuit would hold with Dr. Du Moulin; when the conference began, he was so puzzled to prove his own mission, that after much turning over the Bible, he retired silent and in confusion to a corner of the room; upon which Monsieur Liembrun in indignation addressed himself to Gontiere: "Father," said he, "you told me that if I brought a minister before you, you would confound him; here is one, and you stand dumb." Upon which, the gentleman was confirmed in his religion. And Mr. Campion, notwithstanding all his brags and vain challenges, was so miserably baffled in the four conferences held with him in the Tower, that whoever reads the relation published by his own party, will

* See his *Falsificationum Romanarum*, Tomi primi, liber primus, in the Preface, Lond. 1606, 4to.

† See Du Moulin's Life, p. 14, 15, prefixt to his *Novelty of Popery*, Edit. Lond. 1664, fol.

have other thoughts of his abilities and learning than he could possibly form from the idea the commendations given of him by the missionaries might prevail with him to entertain.

These brags having raised the expectation of the people to admiration, they are well prepared to feed the humour, in which the description given of Monsieur Maimbourg,* is a character of their conduct, that they have no regard to truth or likelihood in what they assert; and though I know there are many among them who abhor such practices, yet the much greater number of them do all copy after the same pattern. When the ingenious author of the *Papist Misrepresented and Represented*,† would establish the books (which our Church rejects for apocrypha), as a part of the canon of Scripture, he cites St. Gregory Nazianzen and St. Ambrose, neither of whom have any thing to the purpose; the first only mentions the persons of the Maccabees, and commends them; and the latter quotes them as we do any other books, but hath not the least tittle of their being part of the sacred canon; but thinking to establish two points by one authority, he tells us in the same chapter, "that St. Jerome doubted of the book of Judith, which for some time seemed to him apocryphal, till the Council of Nice declared it otherwise." Now, though I doubt not it was his design to establish the authority both of a General Council, and the book of Judith by this one instance, yet he hath unhappily failed in both; the confidence with which he backs this affirmation being all the strength of it, for it was impossible there should be any truth in it, seeing when the Council of Nice sat, St. Jerome was either not born, or but two years old; and the Council made no decree at all about the books of Scripture, yet doth that witty author venture these three untruths in one chapter, as if because setting a good face on the matter, prevails with the people of his communion, who are kept from examining what they hear affirmed, we must therefore believe all he saith with the same implicit faith.

But when Baronius and Bellarmine, those champions of the Church of Rome,‡ care not by what means they establish the doctrine of the Pope's power, which is the character given of them by a learned man of their own communion; their unfaith-

* Reflections on Mr. Varillas, p. 14. Amsterd. 1686. 12s.

† Edit. Lond. 1685. Chap. II.

‡ Richer. *Histor. Concil. Gen.* lib. 4. par. 2. [ut supra,] p. 135. Quibus viris hoc propositum esse nemo nescit, ut temporalem curiæ Romanæ Monarchiam quovis jure vel injuria vendicent.

fulness being so obvious that a Franciscan friar* yet living observes, "The great annalist Baronius seems to have had no other end in writing his twelve laborious tomes than to heap together, how well or ill soever, all the topics he could imagine for asserting to the Bishop of Rome the universal monarchy;" when we find those pillars of the cause pointing out the way to the inferior missionaries, it is no wonder if an exact imitation of these great examples be affected by them. And indeed this disposition is so natural to the guides of that Church, that no sooner can a proselyte breathe among them, but he is running in the same path; thus Mr. Cressy† very seriously attempts to persuade the world, "that when examination is made of miracles in order to the canonization of any saint, the testimony of women will not be received:" for which he gives this reason, "because naturally imagination is stronger in them than judgment, and whatever is esteemed by them to be pious, is easily concluded by them to be true;" but though there be very much weight in this reason, yet the matter of fact is so notoriously false, that there is scarce any of their noted saints, in the process of whose canonization we do not find the oaths of women pass current, nay, sometimes without any other testimony to confirm them; for as his right honourable and learned Answerer observes, "the single testimony of the nurse was the only evidence of the first miracle that St. Benedict‡ (Mr. Cressy's great patron) wrought:" and in the canonization of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, the attestation of Isabella Monialis was taken to confirm his working miracles; and yet no doubt this plausible assertion of Mr. Cressy's passes for truth among very many who, being destitute of opportunities to discover the mistake, yield firm credit to it, because it is confidently advanced.

There is nothing more frequent in these gentlemen's mouths than, *all the Fathers* are of this opinion, *antiquity* is *unanimous* in this point, and such like bold expressions; though they deserve as much credit as Mr. Cressy's pretence, and very little more.

For though§ Mr. Mumford the Jesuit tells us that the text

* Walsh's History of the Irish Remonstrance, Preface to the Cath. p. 9. Edit. Lond. 1674, fol.

† See Animadversions upon Fanaticism fanatically imputed to the Catholic Church, by the Lord Clarendon, p. 66. Lond. 1674, 8vo.

‡ Ibid. and p. 67.

§ Catholic Scripturist, p. 191. Lond. 1686, 8vo.

of St. Paul, "Let a bishop be the husband of one wife," was only a permission at that time, when it was impossible to find fit men for that office who were single (an assertion perfectly false); that the Apostle would have no man who married a second wife be made a bishop; and that the text is so interpreted by the *Councils* and *Fathers unanimously*,* St. Chrysostom will tell him that this text is so far from being only a permission of marriage for a time, that it is designed for increasing the esteem of it; and if he pleases to consult him in another† homily on the same subject, he will find that the interpretation he calls ridiculous is given by that great divine: "The Apostle," saith he, "forbiddeth excess, because among the Jews the association of a second marriage was lawful, and to have two wives at once:" so that all the Fathers we see are not unanimous in his exposition, though he is pleased to say they are; and if we are, as he tells us in the same place, ridiculous in interpreting the words of Saint Paul in this sense, that a bishop should have but one wife at once, we have very good authority for being so; though his consideration and sincerity was but small when he tells us *all* the Fathers are *unanimous* of his side, and that it is ridiculous to dissent from him. With the same briskness we are told by the‡ Irish Animadverter on the Bishop of Bath and Wells's sermon, that "Melchisedek's bread and wine is owned by all to be a type of the sacrament;" I suppose he meant *all* of his communion, for he must be very ignorant not to know that the Protestants deny it; and yet by his telling the Bishop that he durst not meddle with that point because of this *universal* consent, he seems to extend his *all* beyond the narrow bounds of the Roman Church. But we may well expect such a spirit of confidence in the members of a Church, in whose *Rule of Faith*, the *Council of Trent*, we find this assertion,§ "that the ancient Fathers, when they gave the eucharist to infants, did not teach it was necessary to salvation that they should receive it;" an affir-

* Τὸ πρᾶγμα οὐκ ἔστιν ἐνάγεα, ἀλλ' οὕτω τίμιον ὥς μετ' αὐτοῦ δύνασθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον ἀναβαίνειν θρόνον. Hom. 2. in Tit. [vol. 11. p. 799. Par. 1738.]

† Τὴν ἀμετρίαν κωλύων ἐπειδὴ ἐπὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐξῆν καὶ δευτεροῖς ὁμιλεῖν γάμον, καὶ δύο ἔχειν κατὰ ταῦτὸν γυναῖκα. Hom. 3. in 1 Tim. [Paris. 1636.]

‡ Animadversions by way of answer to a Sermon preached by Dr. Kenn, &c. p. 4. Lond. 1687, 4to.

§ Sess. 21. c. 4. eos nulla salutis necessitate id fecisse sine controversia credendum est. [Labbé, Concil. vol. 14. p. 847. Lut. Par. 1672.]

mation that we may in some sort excuse the Fathers of that Council for being so hardy as to advance, their skill in antiquity being so very small, that it is more than probable very few of them knew the contrary; though a little more modesty might have been expected than so rashly to pronounce against the whole current of the Fathers, and the universal tradition of the Church for some ages, nay against the decree of Pope Innocent I., who, as* Saint Augustine assures us, taught that “little children cannot have eternal life without baptism, and the participation of the body and blood of Christ;” with which place, when Mr. Campion was pressed, he, after the example of this Council, as† positively answered there is no such decree, though the very work of Saint Augustine was brought, and this passage shewed him. With the very same sincerity doth Bellarmine‡ affirm that the *whole Church* and *all* the Greek and Latin Fathers teach, that when Christ said, “Upon this rock will I build my Church,” he thereby meant Peter; and Alexander Natalis,§ that the Fathers, with a *nemine contra dicente*, interpret the rock to be that apostle; there needs but very little reading to confute this, notwithstanding all the assurance it is backed with; for not only particular Fathers tell us, that when our Lord said, *upon that rock*, he meant upon the faith of the confession Peter had then made, insomuch that Saint Ambrose|| is positive it is not of the *flesh* but of the *faith* of Peter that this is said: but the main stream of antiquity runs this way, to establish that exposition which¶ St. Austin so plainly gives, “that the Church was established upon that faith which Peter had then confessed, when he said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:” nay, so far are the ancient writers from being unanimous in this point, that there are three several opinions among them; some, and but very few, affirming it was Peter’s

* Lib. 2. ad Bonif. cont. duas Epist. Pelag. cap. 4. Beatæ memoriæ Innocentius Papa sine baptismo Christi, et sine participatione corporis et sanguinis Christi, vitam non habere parvulos dicit. [vol. 13. p. 541. Bassan. 1797.]

† Conference with Campion in the Tower the second day. [ut supra,] p. 41.

‡ De Romano Pontifice, lib. 1. c. 10.

§ Dissert. 4. Par. 1. p. 274.

|| Non enim de carne Petri, sed de fide dictum est. Lib. de Sacramento Incarnationis. [vol. 2. p. 711. Par. 1690.]

¶ Super hanc fidem, super hoc quod dictum est, Tu es Christus. In Epist. primam Johannis tract. decim.

person in the same sense as all the Apostles* are called the foundation of the Church ; others that it was himself *Christ* designed by the word *rock* ; and the third that which I have mentioned, that it was the faith then confessed by St. Peter, which hath near threescore Fathers and Councils to authorize it, where the first hath hardly six. Judge now on which side the *nemine contra dicente* lies.

By this time I think it pretty evident that these gentlemen are too much akin to those who are desirous to be† teachers of the law, but understand not (or at least mind not) what they say nor whereof they affirm ; which makes the advice of one of themselves in another case very seasonable,‡ who tells us that this huffing humour is caution enough to any reasonable man to take care ; for if it be our duty to take nothing in religion upon trust, it is certainly of very great concern that we be suspicious in trusting those whose insincerity is so very great, that they are not ashamed to publish the most palpable untruths ; what is to be expected then from their discourses with ignorant and unwary men, especially in private, where they are in no such danger of being exposed ?

CHAP. III.

OF THEIR SLANDERS.

WHEN the Prophet Jeremiah was, in the name of the Lord, endeavouring to reform the corruptions of the Jewish Church, he complains that his enemies said one to another,§ “ Come and let us devise devices against him, and let us smite him with the tongue ; Report, say they, and we will report it ;”|| which made him give that caution and advice to those who obeyed the voice of the Lord by him : ¶ “ Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother ; for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.” Whose case being so very like that of the Reformed Churches, both in the work he undertook, reformation, and in the opposition which was made to him by

* Ephes. ii. 20.

† 1 Tim. i. 7.

‡ Good Advice to the Pulpits, p. 50. Lond. 1687, 4to.

§ Jeremiah xviii. 18.

|| Chap. xx. 10.

¶ Chap. ix. 4.

calumnies and *slanders*, his advice is as seasonable to us as to the reforming Jews; we having to deal with a politic sort of men, who, notwithstanding the wise Solomon* hath pronounced, that "he that uttereth slanders is a fool," establish it as a maxim which they are very diligent observers of, *that it is no mortal sin to calumniate falsely to preserve one's honour*, like the heretics St. Augustine† speaks of, "who not being able to defend their cause, set themselves to revile their adversaries, spreading the most false reports, that seeing they cannot evade the force or obscure the evidence of the truth contained in the holy Scriptures, they may render those who preach it odious by reporting all the evil of them they can invent."

I know this is a severe charge, and will be looked upon even by many sober and impartial men as uncharitable; but if they can either prove that the passages I relate are false, or the authors I cite, who maintain it lawful, are forged and corrupted, I am willing to lie under that imputation; but on the other side, if they prove to be truly cited, I must desire of the reader that their character of religious men, and their formal pretences to sincerity, may be looked upon, as indeed they are, but a fair covering and cloak for their designs; and *I challenge* the *whole* body of them to prove one particular instance or citation false, wherein I do not (as Mr. Pulton in his remarks) charge those slanders on them which are only the additions which a story gets by running from hand to hand; for I know it is possible a man may relate things that are false without being guilty of the slander, by being deceived in the account which was given him of those matters; but when men make it their business to defame, and assert the lawfulness of doing it by false reports, I think it no piece of injustice or want of charity to call them slanderers.

I am not insensible that the generality of men are apt to reason with themselves that surely religious men cannot be of such seared consciences as to damn themselves by such malicious backbiting: but in this case such a reflection is ungrounded, for their great casuists defend it to be lawful,

* Prov. x. 18.

† Ep. 137. Qui non habendo quod in causa suæ divisionis defendant, non nisi hominum crimina colligere affectant; et ea vice plura falsissime jactant, et quia ipsam divinæ Scripturæ veritatem criminari et obscurare non possunt, homines per quos prædicatur adducunt in odium, de quibus et fingere quicquid in mentem veniat possunt.

and are so far from being apprehensive of damnation, that they justify its practice, as Father Dicastillo* informs us: "I have maintained (saith he), and do still maintain, that calumny when it is used against a calumniator, though grounded on absolute falsities, is not for that any mortal sin either against justice or charity. And to prove it, I have brought a cloud of our Fathers to witness it, and whole Universities consisting of them, all whom I have consulted, and among others the Rev. Father John Gans, Confessor to the Emperor; the Rev. Father Daniel Bastele, Confessor to the Archduke Leopold; Father Henry, sometime Preceptor to those two Princes; all the public and ordinary Professors of the University of Vienna; all the Professors of the University of Gratz; all the Professors of the University of Prague; of all whom I have at hand the approbations of my opinion, written and signed with their own hands; besides that I have on my side Father Pennalossa, a Jesuit, and Confessor to the King of Spain; Father Pillecorrolli, a Jesuit, and many others." And when this was objected to the Jesuits by the author of the Provincial Letters in his fifteenth letter, the† answerers of that letter, where they undertake to defend themselves, instead of condemning, add more authority to Father Dicastillo's position, by citing several authors besides those mentioned before in defence of it. Neither do they deny the doctrine of Caramuel, who asserts,‡ "that it is a probable opinion, that it is not any mortal sin to calumniate falsely to preserve one's honour, for it is maintained by above twenty grave doctors; so that if this doctrine be not probable, there is hardly any such in all the body of divinity." And the same is asserted by the Theses of the Jesuits § at Lovain, A.D. 1645, in case of calumniating and imposing false crimes, to ruin their credit who speak ill of us.

Besides these universities and divines, who teach the lawfulness of calumnies and false reports, we find it among other rules of the Jesuits, "that they should be sure to put this doctrine in practice, even against those of their own communion, the ancient orders of the Roman Church; for if such happen to be an hindrance to their ambitious designs, by standing in their way,|| the rule is, let their faults be diligently

* De Just. l. 2. tr. 2. disp. 12. n. 404. See this passage in the Provincial Letters, p. 362. edit. Lond. 1657, 8vo.

† Answer to the Provincial Letters, p. 342. edit. Paris, 1659, 8vo.

‡ Provincial Letters, [ut supra,] p. 363. § Ibid. p. 361.

|| Instruct. secret. pro super. Societ. Jesu. p. 11, 12.

noted, and they represented as dangerous to the public peace ;” which, as is observed by one, no enemy to their order,* was a successful means of their enlargement and succeeding greatness, their instilling into the minds of princes by false insinuations, an evil opinion of the other religious orders.† Among the same instructions they are directed, that “all those who hinder and dissuade men from giving estates or money to the Society should be turned out, and to prevent their doing mischief after their ejection,‡ *let their faults be exposed* (saith the eleventh rule), *even such as in discharging their consciences they have revealed to their superiors* : and let strangers be possessed that they were guilty of those crimes which the people are wont to hate us for.” This made Mariana,§ a famous member of that Society, affirm, “that if the apostle St. Paul himself should contradict the Jesuits, and not approve their errors, they would be sure to represent him as an extravagant and restless disturber of and enemy to peace.” The observation of which spirit and doctrine, made one|| who had been many years a priest declare, “They do not account it evil (as I verily think) to calumniate the Protestants by any device whatsoever that may carry any probability with it, nor make any conscience to tell and publish any untruths, which they think being believed may advance and promote such points and matters as they take upon them to defend for the honour of the Church of Rome and dignity of their priesthood,” which he affirmed upon oath the 25th of June, 1602.

This is observed to be their way of treating their adversaries, by the ingenious and loyal Father Peter Walsh,¶ a friar of the Franciscan order, who acknowledges “that their Catholic

* Discovery of the Society in Relation to their Politics, p. 4. Lond. 1658, 8vo.

† Instruct. secret. ut supra, p. 20.

‡ Ibid. p. 22. Dicantur malæ ejus inclinationes, vitia, defectus, quos de se in manifestatione conscientie aliquando superioribus aperuerat.—Externis insinuantur causæ dismissionis illæ ob quas vulgus nos odio habent, sic enim plausibilior erit dismissio quorumcunque.

§ Bernardi Giraldis Patavini pro Repub. Venetorum Apologia, p. 129. [1635.] He cites Mariana’s words in his Book of Regimine Societatis Jesu, c. 2. Si ipse Paulus Apostolus, Generali Jesuitarum et assentatoribus ejus contradiceret, neque errores illorum probaret, futurum esset ut pro extravagante, inquieto, et turbatore pacis haberetur.

|| Anthony Tirrell in his Examination before Commissioners, June 25, 1602. See it at the end of Dr. Harsenet’s Declaration of the Popish Impostures, Lond. 1603, 4to.

¶ Four Letters on several Subjects, p. 69, 1686.

writers are generally hurried on to exorbitant passions and barbarous language (besides many *downright lies* and *mere calumnies* often) against all those that leave their Church." Neither is the treatment they afford those who continuing members of their Church oppose any of their designs, more Christian and sincere, "an example whereof we have in a French bishop,* who had been a great benefactor to the Jesuits, insomuch that in their poems and panegyrics, they had magnified and extolled him for an excellent, learned, and very pious prelate; but when he refused to join with them in their conspiracy against King Henry III., they set themselves to defame him both in their ordinary discourses, and in their books and sermons, affirming they had discovered four and forty heretical tenets in three single leaves of his works, which drew such a vindication from the Bishop as will be a blot to their whole order, while the remembrance thereof remains in the minds of men." And indeed it cannot be supposed they will let slip any occasion of discrediting their enemies, when as you have seen before, they believe they may do it without hazarding their salvation; and that by the credit they have in the world, they may calumniate without any great fear of being accountable to the justice of men.

"When Monsieur Puys,† pastor of St. Niceer at Lyons, translated into French a book concerning the duties of Christians towards their pastors, against those by whom they are diverted from them, the Jesuits esteeming themselves to be reflected on (though no mention was made of the Society), one

* Hospin. *Histor. Jesuit.* [ut supra,] p. 249.—Pontum Tyardæum Episcopum Cabillonensem, eruditionis ac pietatis singularis virum, cum Jesuitæ in suam factionem et conspirationem contra Regem Henricum Tertium pertrahere non possent,—populi furiosum odium et invidiam in caput ejus modis omnibus concitare studuerunt. Est Collegium Divioni Jesuitarum, quod Episcopi hujus non exiguis beneficiis adauctum fuit. Erat enim bonæ partis fundi illius Clientelæ Patronus;—quamobrem libello, etiam Græcis, Latinis et Gallicis versibus, atque oratione soluta scripto et ipsi dicato cum amplissima laudum ejus prædicatione, habuerunt gratiam, et fidem dederunt. Sed quod in conspirationem Jesuitarum, et parricidium Regis consentire nollet, quidam Carolus inter Jesuitas Collegii istius ascriptus linguam suam et calamum superiorum instinctu, vehementer contra illum acuit.—Contra hunc Præsulem, ob dictam causam non solum in familiaribus colloquiis, sed etiam publicis in concionibus atque editis quoque libellis debacchatus est: ac inter alia jactitavit.—Se quadraginta quatuor hæreses in tribus foliis Homiliarum ejus in orationem Dominicam exprompsisse, etc. vid. locum.

† Provincial Letters, [ut supra,] p. 368, 369, 370, 371.

of that order, Father Alby, wrote against the translator, affirming that ‘he was become *scandalous*, lay under the suspicion of *impiety*, of being an *heretic* and *excommunicated*, and deserved to be cast into the fire.’ But all these imputations were only the pure offspring of their own inventions, for some time after (in the presence of several divines and persons of quality,* who all signed the declaration made by both the fathers), viz. Sept. 25th, 1650, when Mr. Puys declared to the Jesuit, that in what he had written he ‘designed no reflection upon that *Society*, for which he had a very great esteem;’ Father Alby immediately replied, ‘Sir, the belief I was in that your quarrel was against the Society, of which I have the honour to be a member, obliged me to take pen in hand to answer it; and I thought the manner of my proceeding lawful and justifiable; but coming to a better understanding of your intention, I do now declare that there is not any thing that might hinder me from esteeming you a man of a very illuminated judgment, of sound learning, and *orthodox*, as to manners *unblameable*, and in a word, a *worthy pastor* of your Church.’ So that, by the Jesuit’s own confession he had no ground for his calumnies, but thought it a *lawful* and *justifiable* manner of proceeding to represent a person *impious* and an *heretic* in whom he knew no fault, but that he supposed him no friend to his order.” This passage is so generally known,† that the Jesuits who pretended to answer the Provincial Letters durst not deny it, and therefore pass it over.

In the same manner is that pious and venerable prelate the late Bishop of Pamiers, treated by them, whose life was an exact copy of the primitive holiness and simplicity, yet the Jesuits affirm he was damned,‡ for he had excommunicated three of their order, and put them all under an interdict of hearing confessions in his diocese.

Whatsoever crimes they can imagine will render the Protestants odious to the people, they with all imaginable diligence

* Viz. Mr. De Ville, Vicar General to the Cardinal of Lyons. M. Scarron, Canon and Pastor of St. Paul’s. M. Margat, Messieurs Borrand, Sévé, Aubert and Darvie, Canons of St. Nicier. M. du Gué, President of the Treasurers of France. M. Groslier, Provost of Merchants. M. de Flechere, President, and Lieutenant-General. Messieurs de Boissat, de St. Romain, and de Bartoly, Gent. M. Bourgeois, the King’s Advocate in the Treasurer’s Court of France. M. de Cotton, father and son, and Mr. Boniel.

† In their Answer to the Fifth Letter.

‡ Burnet’s History of the Rights of Princes, p. 399. Lond. 1682, 8vo.

pronounce them guilty of; in which they act (as Sir Edwin Sands* observes) "like a supernatural artist, who in the sublimity of his refined and refining wit disdains to bring only mere art to his work, unless he make also in some sort the very matter itself; so these men in blacking the lives and actions of the Reformers, have partly devised matter of so notorious untruth, that in the better sort of their own writers it happens to be checked, partly suborned other postmen to compose their legends, that afterwards they might cite them in proof to the world as approved authors and histories."

Because they supposed it would be a means to render the Reverend Dr. Du Moulin contemptible to the world, they reported (as he tells us himself),† "that he was a friar's son," though the whole city of Orleans knew the contrary, where his father was born, and of very good note. And I know a Minister who, travelling in some Popish countries, and having been a means to recall a person to our Church, who was near seduced by the continual importunities of some English priests, had a report raised of him that he was a drunkard, and continually spent his time in an alehouse or a tavern, which report the very priest that raised it was afterwards ashamed of, when it was proved to his face that the gentleman had not been within the doors of a public-house, except the first night he came to that town, during the stay of some months which he made there: with the very same disingenuity we find the author of *Advice to the Confuter of Bellarmine*,‡ insinuating that the writer of *The Reflections on the Notes of the Church*, "employed his pen to confute them over a pot of ale;" which unhandsome passage he hath neither been pleased to explain,§ though his Answerer desired to know, "why he commenced his advice with such a suggestion?" nor to defend the truth of a charge which such a passage necessarily implies.

But they are not content to invent crimes, and charge men with actions they never owned or were guilty of, but pretend likewise to dive into men's thoughts, which Surius|| was so

* *Europ. Spec.* p. 101. [Lond. 1687.]

† *Novelty of Popery*, p. 627. [Lond. 1664.]

‡ *Advice to the Confuter of Bellarmine*, p. 1. Lond. 1687, 4to.

§ *Defence of the Confutation of Bellarmine's second Note of the Church*, p. 1. Lond. 1687, 4to.

|| *Laurentii Surii Comment. brevis*, p. 259. Col. 1574. 8vo. *Quod quidem nos de sectarum authoribus dictum præcipue volumus, quos plerosque perspicuum est contra suam mentem et conscientiam longe aliter et scribere et docere quam rem ipsam se habere non sint nescii.*

expert at, that he sticks not to affirm, "that the Protestant divines do generally write against their consciences, and maintain positions which they know are false;" and Mr. Cambden's* adversary was so well acquainted with that learned person's interior (to use a monkish word) that he tells the world, Mr. Cambden dissembled his religion; a calumny, those who are inclined to credit, may see clearly refuted in the place cited in the margin.

That eminent patriarch of the Greek Church (whom with Dr. Smith I shall not be ashamed to esteem a *holy martyr*), "*Cyrillus Lucaris*,† could no sooner begin to print some of the ancient Fathers, and other discourses against the Popish errors, but the emissaries of Rome persuaded the Bassa who then presided at Constantinople, that the Patriarch under pretence of printing, would coin and stamp false money; and finding some passages in one of his books,‡ against the Mahometan religion, they *accused him to the Vizier for writing against the Alcoran*, (were not these Fathers rare Christians?) and that he designed to stir up the Greeks to mutiny, which had near cost that holy man his life, but upon the English Ambassador, Sir Thomas Row, expostulating the matter with the Vizier, the malicious and false informations of the missionaries appeared so horrid and abominable, that the Grand Vizier promised to restore all the goods which had been seized upon the first accusation, and cast the Jesuits into prison, where they had been all strangled, if the intercession of the English Ambassador had not prevailed for their lives; but they were banished the Grand Seignior's dominions, and their house and library given to the patriarch."§

In the same manner, because Father Paul, the famous writer of the History of the Trent Council, opposed himself to the ambitious pretences of the Pope, who claimed a temporal authority over all princes,|| the Court of Rome carried the greatest bitterness against him, daily writing libels and invectives stuffed up with lies and forgeries; in the inventing of which there was none more concerned than Maffeo Barbarini, at that

* Bishop Usher's Life and Letters, p. 63, 65. Lond. 1686, fol.

† Mr. Thomas Davis's Letter to Archbishop Usher, ib. 381.

‡ Smith's Account of the Greek Church, p. 266, 267, 268. Lond. 1680, 8vo. See also his Miscellanea, p. 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103. Lond. 1686, 8vo.

§ Mr. Davis's Letter, ut supra.

|| Fowlis' History of Romish Treasons, p. 470. Lond. 1681, fol.

time Nuncio in France, and afterwards Pope by the name of Urban VIII.; nay, so far are they guided by this principle, that rather than be wanting in the observation of it, they care not how unlikely their slanders are, or else they could never have been guilty of so great an indiscretion against the famous Casaubon,* as after they had aspersed his father and his whole family, to declare him (as they did) a man of no judgment, affirming that he could not write Latin, or scarce understand it; when he was known to all the learned men of Europe, to be one of the greatest scholars of that age.

But the Jesuit Parsons† was resolved not to trouble himself with particular persons, nothing less than the whole body of Protestants in England would serve his turn; which made him several times assure Mr. Sheldon, that he would undertake to make the devil speak in any bishop, archbishop, or archheretic in England: and therefore the priests concerned in the exorcising of Sarah Williams‡ and her sister (of whom we shall give a larger account when we come to treat of their miracles), were accustomed frequently to affirm, that all the Protestants in England were possessed, and they should have their hands full with those possessed creatures, when the nation became Catholics.

These one would think were pretty handsome calumnies, and fit for such men to invent and publish; but their late poetical convert hath taught the succeeding gentlemen who shall be employed in this office, a way to affirm the truth of their reports, notwithstanding all imaginable evidence of their falsity; for he, not content to affirm that§ “among all the volumes of divinity written by Protestants, there was not one original treatise which handled distinctly and by itself, that Christian virtue of humility;” he renews|| the same challenge near a year after, though the author¶ of the *Difference between the Protestant and Socinian methods*, had told him there was one written by Mr. William Allen; and set down the place

* Ibid. p. 514.

† Sheldon's *Survey of the Miracles of the Church of Rome*, p. 25. Lond. 1616, 4to.

‡ See their Examinations in Dr. Samuel Harsenet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures in casting out of Devils*.

§ *Defence of the Papers written by the late King*, p. 126. Lond. 1686, 4to.

|| *Hind and Panther in the Preface*, Lond. 1687, 4to.

¶ *Difference between the Protestant and Socinian Methods*, p. 62. Lond. 1686, 4to.

where, and year in which it passed the press. In the first, indeed, he limited his assertion to such as he had seen and heard of, wherein as he shewed some modesty, so he was likely to do no great harm, it being sufficiently known that in matters of divinity his acquaintance goes but a very little way, though in his own profession he is deservedly esteemed a master; but to enlarge his assertion, and after such an information, to make that general, which he was too modest to do before, shews him an excellent proselyte: and in this point he seems able to instruct even his ghostly Fathers.

Another artifice by which they endeavour to create an aversion in the people's minds for the ministers of our Church, is by flying at them all together, and reproaching them as covetous and greedy of wealth; this they are instructed to do by Seignior Ballarini,* who, giving advice to Father Young, concerning the best way of managing the Popish interest in England; among the other directions, lays down this, "That the bishops and ministers of the Church of England be represented as worldly and careless;" which letter was found in Father Young's study after his death, and translated out of Italian into English. And this slander they have so far improved, that as a person of honour observes,† "they have entered into a conspiracy in undervaluing whatsoever is written by any clergyman, how learned or virtuous soever, in defence of the Church of England, as if he spoke only for his own interest; so that they who would undermine it by all the foul and dishonest arts imaginable, have the advantage to be considered as persons engaged on that account, merely and purely by the impulsion of their consciences, and for the discovery of such errors as are dangerous to the souls of men; whilst they who are most obliged, and are best able to refute those malicious pretences, and to detect the fraud and ignorance of those seditious undertakers, are looked upon as men not to be believed, at least partial, and that all they say is said on their own behalf: this is a sad truth, and a new engine to make a battery, at which Atheism may enter without opposition, with all its instruments and attendants." In prosecution of which design, it is usual with them to recount the riches of the clergy, while they maliciously and falsely insinuate that the revenues ecclesiastical in England are far greater than in

* Stillingfleet's *Unreason. of Separat.* Pref. p. 22. Lond. 1681, 4to.

† Lord Clarendon against Cressy, p. 13, 14. [Lond. 1674.]

Popish countries ; but if we come to examine but the wealth of ecclesiastical persons in the Popish times in this nation, we shall find that it exceeded by many degrees that poor pittance which Reformed divines enjoy, among whom it is known that multitudes have hardly sufficient to buy themselves bread ;* several hundreds of our livings not amounting to ten pounds a year a-piece, and several not to five, when the sole revenues of the monasteries and hospitals, besides the two universities, and several monasteries not valued, in King Henry VIIIth's time, amounted to† one hundred eighty-six thousand, five hundred and twelve pounds odd money ; besides the bishoprics and parishes, which being joined to the former sum, the clergy of the Church of Rome were possessed of the yearly sum of above three hundred and twenty thousand, one hundred and eighty pounds even in those times, what would they have yielded then at this day ? If then the gentlemen of the Church of Rome judge the provisions for the Reformed clergy too great, the possessions they enjoyed will certainly appear subject (and consequently themselves) to the same accusation, but upon much better grounds. Especially when we consider, that *never any clergy in the Church of God, hath been or is maintained with less charge than the Established Clergy of the Church of England* ; which an ingenious gentleman‡ hath evidently proved. To whose arguments, if our adversaries think fit to reply, they shall not want a defender : and I am ready to prove out of their own authors, that the revenues of the French clergy amount to above one million, and two hundred thousand pounds of our English money yearly, that they possess seven parts in twelve of the whole revenue of the kingdom ; and that the Archbishopric of Toledo in Spain, is as rich as some kingdoms. And now let all the world judge to whom the appellation of hirelings belongs, which they are so ready to bestow on us. But not content to cast their reproaches upon the body of the clergy, the Oxford writer hath attempted to bring the charge of worldliness home to a particular bishop, but so unsuccessfully, that it is evident he was forced to use his invention to maintain it, which all his

* Speed in his Chronicle, reckons that in the beginning of King James's time, there were 4543 livings under ten pounds, Edit. Lond. 1623, at the end of the Reign of King Henry VIII., p. 1101.

† Ibid. p. 1100.

‡ The Undeceiving of the People in the point of Tithes, by Ph. Trelinie, Gent. Lond. 1651, 4to.

assurance, (though he hath a great talent that way) will not be able to do; for whereas he affirms, that the excellent Hooper* (who in Queen Mary's days sealed the Protestant religion with his blood), held two bishoprics at once; it is notoriously false:† for he never held but the bishopric of Worcester, from which Gloucester was divided by King Henry VIII., and reunited to it by King Edward; so that all Hooper enjoyed was but one bishopric which had some years been divided into two; and yet our author pretends he held them in *commendam*.

If this means will not do the work, and our divines still keep up their esteem in the minds of the people, the next design is to expose them as guilty of some immoral crime; to this end they have (in this city) “dressed some of their own party in the habit of a minister, who, according to instructions, resorted to houses of ill repute, while others of the gang, planted there on purpose, pointing at the supposed minister, have been heard to say aloud, There goes Dr. or Mr. such an one, that the people might suppose the most eminent of their ministers, frequenters of such places;” and I can name some divines whom they have by this artifice endeavoured to defame.

If they have a design that any one of our ministers should be esteemed idle and lazy men, and negligent in their office, they watch till he is gone abroad, then repairing to some sick person of their acquaintance, they desire them to send for him while they are in the house, and when the messenger returns with an account that he is not within, they take occasion to tell the sick person that our ministers are never to be found, but always gadding abroad, without minding the concerns of their people; but for their parts, they are always ready to perform the duties of their office to all sorts that send for them; and thus they served an eminent divine very lately.

But that gentleman had a pretty good stock of confidence, who urging a woman to become his proselyte, told her that our divines were men of no learning, and could not preach but by the helps they received from hearing and reading the sermons of the Romish priests. And yet this was very gravely urged by one of them not many months since. I do not relate this passage that I think there is any danger of its being believed,

* Fifth part of Church Government, p. 68. [Oxf. 1687.]

† See Appendix to Dr. Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. 2. p. 396. [Lond. 1670.] Reflections on the Historical part of Church Government, Part 5. p. 35. Oxford, 1687, 4to.

even by the meanest understandings, to our prejudice, but to let the world see that there is no slander, how improbable or senseless soever, which these men are ashamed of.

The truth is, they find calumny their best weapon, and therefore are resolved to use it at all adventures. Hence it is we find among the rest of the directions given by the Jesuit* Contzen, in his Advice for bringing Popery into a country, that those who preach against a toleration, suspecting the design of the Papists in it, be traduced as men that preach very unseasonable doctrine, that are proud, conceited, and enemies to peace and union. And for the better managing the Popish interest in England, Seignior† Ballarini directs Father Young, "to make it appear, underhand, that the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church of England comes near to them; that our Common Prayer is but little different from their Mass; and that the ablest and wisest men among us are so moderate, that they would willingly go over to them or meet them half way; for thereby the more staid men will become more odious, and others will run out of all religion for fear of Popery."

And we find even at this time they are observing this instruction, to which end‡ one of their number hath been at the pains to shew, that the Church of England and the Church of Rome are agreed, and the whole controversy lies between the Church of Rome and dissenting Protestants; but I suppose, since the difference between the two Churches hath been so clearly related in the Answer to that pamphlet,§ they will for the time to come keep closer to the advice of doing their business underhand, for their discourse will hardly convince any body that we are agreed with them.

But it is very pleasant to behold these gentlemen labouring with all their might to asperse the Reformers, when if those passages they lay to their charge be blots indeed, they are as prejudicial to the Gospel itself, and to the greatest of the Romish saints, as, if we allowed them in their full latitude, they

* Adami Contzen Politicorum Libri decem. p. 96. [Mogunt. 1620.] he advises to follow the example of those, Qui cum recusarent, quasi superbi, contumaces, inobedientes magistratui accusabantur, etc.

† Long's History of Plots, p. 89. Lond. 1684, 8vo. Dr. Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, [ut supra,] p. 21. of the Preface.

‡ The Agreement between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, Lond. 1687, 4to.

§ The Difference between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, Lond. 1687, 4to.

can be to us. Thus the Considerer upon the spirit of Luther, spends much time and pains to prove that Luther's doctrine was not of God, because he relates several arguments which the devil used against the mass;* thereby attempting to drive him to despair, because he had for many years been a Romish priest; upon which Mr. Pulton puts this question,—“Now I ask whether the doctrine delivered by the spirit of untruth can be from the Holy Ghost?”† Now, though we tell these gentlemen that Luther spoke this by way of parable, yet, seeing that they are deaf on that ear, let it be for once allowed that it was a real conference, and all they can draw from it is, either that knotty question of Mr. Pulton, whether the doctrine delivered by the spirit of untruth can be from the Holy Ghost? or, that Luther could not be an holy man, because the devil was so often with him? which is the great argument of the Oxford considerer, and of Mr. Pulton himself in the tenth page of his remarks. As for the question, I find in the Gospel the devils themselves bearing testimony to our Saviour,‡ “that he was Christ the Son of the living God,” acknowledging him to be “the Holy One of God;”§ and a whole legion of these unclean spirits crying out, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God?”|| And to St. Paul the spirit of divination bore the same witness, that he “was the servant of the most high God, and shewed the way of salvation.”¶ Nay, I find also that God made use of the evil spirit's testimony for the conversion of many,** when the sons of a Jew undertook to call upon a man who was possessed, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, “We adjure you, by Jesus whom Paul preacheth,” the evil spirit answered, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them and overcame them. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus, and fear fell on them all, and *the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified:*” of which the following verses give particular instances. Now, the same answer which Mr. Pulton will make to an heathen, putting the same question in this case, will give full satisfaction to that which he puts to us; for if it be a good evidence to prove the doctrine of Luther

* Considerations on the Spirit of Martin Luther, sect. 32. [Oxf. 1687.]

† Pulton's Remarks, p. 1. [Lond. 1687.]

‡ Luke iv. 41.

§ Mark i. 23, 24.

|| Luke viii. 28, 29, 30.

¶ Acts xvi. 16, 17.

** Acts xix. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

false, because the devil owned the truth of it, the conclusion will hold as firm against the deity of Christ and truth of the Gospel, which the devil was forced to confess. And if the second inference concludes against Luther, what shall we think of their admired St. Anthony,* to whom the devil frequently appeared, and "using an articulate voice, spake to him, acknowledging that he had often attempted to corrupt him, but was not able;" nay, that he was seldom without the company of the devil, either beating him or discoursing with him, the author of that life informs us in a multitude of instances; and yet, for all this, the Papists will maintain his saintship; so that the devil's molestation is no argument against Luther or his doctrine; and there is hardly any of their noted saints whom the writers of their lives do not affect to represent to us as persons from whom the devil was seldom or never absent.

Nor is it any wonder these gentlemen should be so busy in scandalizing our divines, though the reflection falls so severely upon their own canonized saints, when they have so little consideration as to charge us with those things which others of their own writers, at the same time and on the same subject, do acquit us of; an instance of which we have in their frequent cries that the Exclusion Bill was managed in the House of Commons by the sons of the Church of England,† and that the rebellion was to be laid to their charge;‡ that if we look to the excluding party they were five to one Church of England men, so that our Church must take the shame of all those things to herself.§ These loud clamours have made more noise in the world than all their new tests and instances of the Church of England's loyalty, which I shall examine in another place. But to the comfort of our Church her adversaries agree not together; so that she needs no vindication but what she is able to bring from her greatest enemies; therefore one of them tells the Dissenters that they were the actors not only in

* In vita Antonii, inter Athan. opera. vol. 2. edit. Colon. 1686. [vol. 2. p. 445. Heidelb. 1600.] 'Ανθρωπίνῃ χρώμενος φωνῇ ἔλεγε, πολλοὺς μὲν ἡπάτησα, καὶ πλείστους κατέβαλλον· νῦν δὲ ἐπίσοι καὶ τοῖς σοῖς πόνοις προσβαλὼν ἡσθένησα.

† Answer to a Letter to a Dissenter, p. 4. printed for H. Hills, 1687, 4to.

‡ Mr. Pain's Answer to the Letter to a Dissenter, p. 2. 1687, 4to.

§ Reply to the Reasons of the Oxford Clergy against Addressing, p. 6, 7. 1687, 4to.

'48,' but in the business of the Rye and the west too ;* and one who pleads the very same cause assures us,† that the Dissenters appeared so vigorous in choosing their representatives, that they carried it for three Parliaments successively against the Church of England ; and it was in those three Parliaments that the Exclusion Bill was promoted and stickled for ; which is a clear demonstration that the exclusioners were not five to one of the Church of England. But as these gentlemen contradict themselves in this point, so by the same assertion they overthrow their great work of persuading the Dissenters that the Church of England never was, nor never will be willing to ease their consciences by a comprehension, when, by affirming the exclusion Parliaments to have been composed of Church of England men, they give themselves the lie, seeing all the world knows it was in those Parliaments that the Bill of Comprehension was promoted.

As they will coin immoral actions for us, so likewise with the same sincerity they make a great complaint of our falsifications, when he that examines into the matter will find no such thing : thus the vindicator of Monsieur de Meaux fills part of a page, with a list of his adversary's falsifications and calumnies, &c. of which you may judge by this instance ;‡ that ingenious gentleman tells us, "that Mr. de Meaux had affirmed that the denying of salvation to infants dying unbaptized was a truth, which never any one before Calvin durst openly call in question ;" this the Vindicator§ calls a "corrupting the bishop's words ;" which are these, "the Lutherans believe with the Catholic Church the absolute necessity of baptism, and are astonished with her that such a truth should be denied, which never any one before Calvin durst openly call in question."|| Now I *appeal* to all the world, whether it be not the same thing, to affirm that baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation, and that those who die unbaptized are not saved ; for if it be absolutely necessary, then without it there can be no salvation, and whoever asserts that, denies salvation

* Letter in Answer to two main Questions, p. 7, 14, by T. G. Lond. 1687, 4to.

† Discourse for taking off the Test, p. 35. Lond. 1687, 4to.

‡ Defence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, p. 39. [Lond. 1686.]

§ Reply to the Defence, &c. p. 62. [Lond. 1687.]

|| Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church, p. 80. Lond. 1685, 4to.

to those who have it not ; let our Vindicator then defend himself from the imputation of calumny, which I lay to his charge in this particular, the calling that a falsification and corruption which is the true meaning of the bishop's words.

I shall end this head with two instances of their calumniating the poor Protestants of France, though I could give as many hundreds.* “ During the heat of the war between France and Holland, the Reformed of Dauphine had kept a fast in all their churches, and the synod that had ordered it, had enjoined all the ministers that belonged to it, assisted by their ancients, to visit families, and put them in mind of what had been promised to God on the fast-day, which one of the ministers (against whom the friars of St. Anthony had a long time watched for an occasion) performing, those pretended religious wrote to Mr. Le Tellier, Secretary of State, that something was contriving against the King's service ; that the Huguenots had celebrated a fast through all the Dauphinate ; that there was a plot couched under this fast, and that devotion was only the pretext of it. That this minister had held secret assemblies at the houses of the principals of his parish, that he had prayed for the success of the Hollanders' arms, and that great sums of money were gathered by him and his party to send to the Prince of Orange ; and with this fair story they caused a great deal of trouble to the gentleman, and suborned witnesses to maintain the accusation ; but he broke through all, and cleared his innocence to the shame of his false accuser.” And as they persecuted those poor people with slanders in their own country, so they continue to prosecute the same unworthy methods against them in ours, where they are fled for relief from the grievous oppressions of their enemies ; for knowing the greatest part of their subsistence must come from the charity of their Protestant brethren, they have endeavoured to hinder them of that, by spreading a report that they are Papists. This as to London is known to many hundreds, and that they have done the same in Ireland, we are informed by an ingenious and worthy gentleman,† who tells us who they are that can prove the truth of his assertion.

Thus are we dealt with by the Romanists, as the primitive Christians were treated by the heathens, but that which supported them doth likewise encourage us, seeing He whom we serve hath pronounced, “ Blessed are ye when men shall revile

* Policy of the Clergy of France, p. 57, 58, 59. Lond. 1681, 8vo.

† Hunting of the Romish Fox, p. 94, 95. Dublin, 1683, 8vo.

you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake :”* though we cannot forbear to admonish our adversaries of that divine threatening, “Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off;”† which is spoken so particularly to them, that it is impossible for them to escape while they do such things, though they may flatter themselves that their slanders are public, when the denunciation is against those who slander privily ; but if one of those crimes be of such an heinous nature, how much greater is the guilt of both, which I wish I had no reason to charge upon them. Nay, we have this to comfort ourselves with, that these accusations‡ are commonly the last refuge, and therefore that cause which stays itself so much upon them cannot hold long.

I noted before, that these gentlemen pretend to know what passes in the most inmost recesses of the hearts of men, and well they may, when they are so ready to dive into the secrets of the divine Providence, and from the sudden death of persons to conclude what the designs of God in such particular dispensations are. In which knowledge they pretend to be so versed, that it is one of the notes whereby to know their Church, given us by themselves, the unhappy death of the Church’s enemies. That this can be no note of the Church, I shall not concern myself to prove, but refer my reader to the Discourse§ on this subject, where he will be abundantly satisfied, that it cannot be a note to know the Church by ; and that it is more favourable to us than the Roman Church, if it were one : all I shall observe is, that if all the stories they invent, and the reports they spread of the unhappy end of their adversaries were true, yet we know “that there is a just man that perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness ;”|| “that there are just men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and there are wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous ;”¶ so that seeing all things come alike to all, there can nothing be concluded against any Church, from the judgments which fall on the heads of particular members of it.** And our Saviour himself assures us, that such judgments are often sent, where the persons punished are not greater

* Matth. v. 11.

† Psalm ci. 5.

‡ Answer to a Letter to a Dissenter, [ut supra,] p. 5. printed for Henry Mills.

§ Discourse of the Notes of the Church, p. 333 to 365. Lond. 1687, 4to.

|| Eccles. vii. 15.

¶ Chap. viii. 14.

** Chap. ix. 2.

sinner than those who at the same time are spared, which he illustrates by the instances of those "upon whom the tower of Siloam fell;"* and the unfortunate Galileans, "whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices."†

But let our Saviour observe what he will, there are a sort of men, whose policies scorn to be founded on his holy maxims, and are therefore resolved to invent dismal stories, where they cannot find true ones, to work upon the spirits of the more unthinking sort; and therefore in the time of the siege of Paris, during the league in France, the priests were grown to that height of immodesty (not to give it a worse name) as to persuade the people there, who generally believed it, "that the thunder of the Pope's excommunications had so blasted the heretics, that their faces were grown black and ugly as devils, their eyes and looks ghastly, and their breath noisome and pestilent."‡ And in Spain,§ the same instruments of Rome had possessed the people, "that since the English left the Roman religion, they were transformed into strange horrid shapes, with heads and tails like beasts and monsters;" which was so generally believed among them, that when the Earl of Nottingham went ambassador into Spain, A.D. 1603, the country people could hardly believe their eyes, that the English were such comely and accomplished gentlemen, whose deformity they had before so often heard confidently asserted.

And as they are always employed in aspersing the living, so they exert the same diligence in forming some hideous relation of the manner of their deaths, their implacable malice following them as it did Father Paul Sarpi,|| the Venetian, to his grave, "publishing impudent and fabulous stories concerning his death, of his dying howling, of strange apparitions of black dogs, of terrible noises heard in his cell and chambers, and several such lying forgeries, as those idle people used to invent upon Luther, Calvin, and others, who will not truckle to the usurpation of the Roman Court. But the people of Venice who knew him better, accounted him a saint, hanging up their votive tablets at his sepulchre."

"Nay, they can go yet a step farther, and those very judgments which GOD inflicts upon themselves, they have the face to affirm, were strokes of divine vengeance on the Protestants ;

* Luke xiii. 4.

† Luke xiii. 1, 2.

‡ *Europæ Spec.* [ut supra,] p. 135.

§ *Wilson's History of Great Britain*, p. 26. Lond. 1653, fol.

|| *Fowlis's History of Romish Treasons*, p. 470. [Lond. 1681.]

thus when there were some hundreds* of the Romish profession met to hear Father Drury, a noted Jesuit, preach in the Black Friars, October 26, 1623, it pleased God that the chamber where they were, fell down, and near a hundred persons with the preacher were killed outright, and many hurt; yet had they the confidence to affirm, that this was a Protestant assembly, publishing† a book *relating great judgments shewn on a sort of Protestant heretics, by the fall of a house in Black Friars, London, in which they were assembled to hear a Geneva lecture*; and Dr. Gouge‡ tells us when and where this relation was printed in his account of that sad providence."

I might particularize in abundance of such passages, but these are enough to let the reader see that it was not without cause I gave him caution in the first chapter *to suspect them*, for into what a maze of errors doth he run, who takes the accounts given by those men of the lives and deaths of their adversaries upon their authority, who give themselves such a liberty to devise fables, and then report them!

This over-politic and wise sort of men reach yet a note higher, and knowing of how great consequence the revolt of any eminent divine is, are as liberal in their reports that such and such persons are become Catholics (as they call them), in which they have as little respect to truth as in the former instances. "But they find by their experience, that news make their impression upon their first reporting, and that then if it be good, it greatly raises up the spirit and confirms the mind, especially of the vulgar, who easily believe all that their betters tell them; that afterwards when such stories happen to be controlled, men's spirits being cold are not so sensible as before, and either little regard it, or impute it to common error or uncertainty of things; yea, and that the good news comes to many men's ears who never hear of the check it hath; and at least it may serve their turn for some present exploit, as merchants do by their news, who finding some difficulty in accommodating their affairs, have in use to forge letters or otherwise to raise bruits, either of some prosperous success in princes' actions, or of some great alteration in some kind of merchan-

* Wilson's History of Great Britain, [ut supra,] p. 241.

† Mirror or Looking-Glass both for Saints and Sinners, p. 195. Lond. 1671, fol.

‡ Key for Catholics, p. 258. Lond. 1674, 4to.

dise, which may serve for the present instant to expedite their business.”*

Whether the missionaries take this piece of policy from them, or are only imitated by them, is not material, but that, being secure of an evasion if their report be found untrue, that they were misinformed, and knowing well that hundreds who hear the account they give, are never undeceived by wanting opportunities to discover its falsity; they are no modester in this particular than in the other slanders is most certain.

Thus in the year 1597,† they spread a report throughout Germany, Holland, and Italy, that Beza had renounced his religion before the Senate, and had exhorted the magistrates to reconcile themselves to the Church of Rome;‡ and that by his example many citizens of Geneva had done the like;§ whereupon he was absolved by the bishop of that city, before his death, by special order from the Pope. This we are assured by several French priests|| was generally believed, till *Beza* wrote several French and Latin letters to convince the world of the forgery, and that he was yet alive, and he died¶ not till six years after.

Of the very same nature was the report of the conversion of the reverend Peter Du Moulin,** which even while he was minister of the Protestant Church in Paris, and writing against Rome, was publicly preached in the city in many pulpits, and benefices assigned to him: they asserted in their sermons, that he was preparing to go to Rome; which was so generally believed, that the people flocked to a certain church, and there waited expecting to hear him make his recantation. Upon which he observes, “that such tricks are apt to astonish the people for a season, and an untruth that was believed for three days hath done some effect.”—“And I am able to prove that a minister now in England, travelling in company with others of our nation of the Protestant religion, and making a small journey alone, to a neighbour city to that they then resided in; the priests came to several of his fellow-travellers, assuring

* Europ. Spec. [ut supra,] 114, 115.

† M. Spon's History of the City and State of Geneva, p. 144. Lond. 1687, fol.

‡ Jesuits' Catechism, p. 62. [1602.]

§ Sands' Europ. Spec. [ut supra,] p. 113.

|| Jesuits' Catechism, p. 62.

¶ History of Gen. [ut supra,] p. 144.

** Novelty of Popery, lib. 7. c. 10. cont. 8. [ut supra,] p. 627.

them that the said minister was become a Romanist, that he was publicly reconciled, and therefore surely they would not refuse to relinquish that religion, which he whose profession obliged him to defend it, and who understood it best, durst not continue in it. This report was affirmed with so much confidence, that upon the minister's return, several persons of the Roman Catholic religion, congratulated him for his happy change, and one of the English was ready to follow his example if he had not in time discovered the cheat."

And it is no longer since than the winter 1685, that a report went current through all the counties in England, where there are many Romanists, that Dr. Burnet was at Rome become a Papist, and that great preferments were bestowed upon him; this hath been affirmed to me by several for a certain truth, when I made diligent inquiry, those gentlemen affirming, that they had it from very good hands, and had seen some letters from foreign parts which confirmed it. "But more immodest was the pretence of the Dean of Norwich's conversion about two years since, which several priests affirmed to a servant maid, whom they knew to be a great admirer of that divine, urging her to follow the example of such a learned man, who was so deservedly esteemed by her; which they reiterated with so much confidence and frequency, that the maid promised to turn likewise; but being convinced by an eminent person (who carried her to hear that Reverend Dean preach), that she was abused by a notorious untruth; she was confirmed in her aversion to that Church, which is upheld by such unworthy means: and I cannot but observe the providence of God in this matter, that the sermon which the maid was carried to hear, was levelled against the Popish errors; whereby she was not only informed of the abuse, but instructed too."

But their greatest traffic is in the pretended conversion of dying persons; thus they would make a Romanist of dying Beza six years before his death; and this blot they have endeavoured to cast upon the memory of that excellent prelate Bishop King, Mr. Musket* the Jesuit, publishing a book of his conversion to Rome upon his deathbed, intituled, *The Bishop of London's Legacy*. This relation we are assured did mightily shock the people's minds;† but it is wholly false, his son, Dr. Henry King, since bishop of Chichester, preaching a

* *Gee's Foot out of the Snare*, p. 76. [Lond. 1624.]

† *Birckbeck's Protestant Evidence*, Cent. 16. p. 188. Lond. 1635, 4to.

sermon for his father's vindication at St. Paul's Cross, Nov. 25, 1621, where he assures the world, that the Bishop before his death received the eucharist at the hands of his chaplain, Dr. Cluet, together with his wife, his children, his family, Sir Henry Martin, his Chancellor, Mr. Philip King, his brother, &c. protesting to them that his soul had greatly longed to eat that last supper, and to perform that last Christian duty before he left them; and gave thanks to God, that he had lived to finish that blessed work. And then drawing near his end, he caused his chaplain to read the confession and absolution in the Common Prayer. And the person who was reported to reconcile him, Mr. Thomas Preston,* being examined before the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other commissioners, protested before God, as he should answer it at the dreadful day of judgment, that the Bishop of London did never confess himself to him, nor ever received sacramental absolution at his hands, nor was ever by him reconciled to the Church of Rome; neither did renounce before him the religion established in the Church of England; yea, he added farther, "that to his knowledge he was never in company with the Bishop, never received any letter from him, never wrote to him, nor did he ever see him in any place whatsoever, nor could have known him from another man." The same did Father Palmer,† the Jesuit (whom they affirmed to be one of those by whom he was reconciled), affirm, that he never saw the Bishop. This book of Musket's was known to be such a notorious forgery, that Mr. Anderton,‡ an ingenious priest, expressed his sorrow that ever such a book should be suffered to come forth; "for it would do them more hurt than any book they ever wrote, yet have they since altered the title, and so printed it again; and a book§ exceedingly admired among them, written about fifteen years since, and dedicated (as I remember) to the Duke of Buckingham, insists much upon this conversion; which makes me beseech my brethren of our Church, that they would be careful to what assertion they give credit; and *believe nothing in the writings of these men upon their authority; for let a thing be never so false, they will not stick to report it, and though*

* Ibid. p. 189, and Foot out of the Snare, [ut supra,] p. 77. See a Relation of this Forgery in the History of the Church of Great Britain from the Birth of our Saviour, p. 134, 188. Lond. 1674, 4to.

† Foot out of the Snare, [ibid.] p. 77.

‡ Ibid. p. 78.

§ It is a thick quarto, I have seen it, but cannot remember the title.

it be exposed and confuted, *they will urge it with the same confidence, as an uncontradicted truth.*

In the same manner when Father Redmond Caron, who wrote in defence of loyalty to the King* against the rebellious opinions and doctrines of the Court of Rome, lay upon his deathbed in Dublin, A.D. 1666, the priests raised a report that he retracted his signature of the Loyal Irish Remonstrance, and all his books on that subject; but they were too quick in spreading this piece of calumny against that loyal man, for the account came to his ears before he died, upon which, in the presence of many of his own order, he protested solemnly that he was so far from recanting, that the doctrine which he had taught, he looked upon as the doctrine of Christ, and that it was his duty to maintain it. Thus if any of their own Church be of a sounder principle than themselves, they cannot help practising that rule of the Jesuits,† whereby they are directed to report, that such as leave them are very desirous to be received again; and although they are so often proved and exposed to the world as calumniators and forgers, they with the greatest unconcernedness invent and report anew upon the next occasion.

But that the world may not be always fed with false stories, they cast about for an artifice to deceive them by false converts, appointing men to pretend themselves Protestants, and after some time to be reconciled to the Romish Church, by the means of their missionaries.‡ “Thus, A.D. 1583, at the sessions at Gloucester in the month of August, one Richard Summers was apprehended, who outwardly seemed a Protestant, but being one day present at a discourse between one of the Bishop of Gloucester’s chaplains and a Puritan (as they were then called), used this expression, If this be the fruits of Protestantism, I will lament my ways, and turn to my mother the Church of Rome, seeing the Church of England is divided. The chaplain upon this, suspecting this man, one day disguised himself, and traced him to a house, where he found him in a surplice, and heard him say mass; after which he dogged him to his lodging, and had him apprehended.”

It is an attempt not impossible to succeed, to raise such re-

* History of the Irish Remonstrance, [ut supra,] p. 759.

† Instruct. secret. pro super. Societ. Jesu. [Arcan. Societ. Jes.] p. 23. [1635.] De dismisso in exhortationibus dicatur, quod iterum ardentem petat ingredi societatem.

‡ Hunting of the Romish Fox, p. 155, 156. [Dub. 1683.]

ports of particular private men ; but to tell the world of whole bodies of men, whole nations, and countries, and sovereign princes becoming converts, when they know the contrary to be the real truth, is something more amazing, and able to surprise the most thinking men ; yet were not these gentlemen ashamed to affirm even at Rome itself* (where it is an ordinary practice) with great solemnity, that the Patriarch of Alexandria, with all the Greek Church of Africa, had by their ambassadors submitted and reconciled themselves to the Pope, and received from his Holiness absolution and benediction ;" but though this was found a fable, about the same time they reported that the King of Scots† (King James) had chased the ministers away, and executed two of them, bestowing their goods upon the Roman Catholics ; that not only Beza‡ had recanted his religion, but the city of Geneva also sought to be reconciled, and had sent to Rome an ambassage of submission : "This news was whispered among the Jesuits two months before it became public, but at length there came a solemn account of it, which run through all Italy, and was so verily believed to be true, that several went to Rome on purpose to see those ambassadors ; and to make up the full measure of this Romish policy, there was news sent from Rome to Lyons, that Queen Elizabeth's ambassadors were at Rome, making great instance to be absolved.

"And there is a secular priest who not long since assured me, that he had seen an original instrument under the hand of the late Archbishop of York, and other prelates, with several Divines, among whom he named Dr. Wallis of Oxford, approving several of the Romish doctrines, and particularly prayer to saints, or for the dead ; but though upon my earnest entreaty he promised to procure me a sight of it, yet he never performed it to this day." But this is usual among them ; when they have a design either to make or confirm proselytes, these assertions§ that our greatest men are Papists, in private, are never out of their mouths ; and within these few years they reported publicly in Ireland,|| that not only his late and present Majesty, but all the nobility and gentry of the kingdom of England were privately of their religion.

* Europ. Spec. [ut supra,] p. 112, 113.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. and History of Geneva, [ut supra,] p. 144.

§ Sheldon of Miracles, p. 52. [Lond. 1616.]

|| Franciscan Convert, by Ant. Egan, p. 24. Lond. 1673, 4to.

And no longer since than the year 1678,* it was generally reported at Rome, for six months together, that the Armenian Patriarch, with six and thirty bishops, were on their way thither, to submit to, and acknowledge the apostolic see; though this was a sham like the rest of their great conversions, on which I shall make some few reflections by a short account of the greatest of them, which they are most ready to boast of at this day.

The conversions in the Indies have made so great a noise among them, that multitudes are possessed with a belief of every thing they are pleased to report concerning them; but a Jesuit of note assures us,† that during forty years of the missionaries abode among them, there was hardly one Indian to be found who understood any two articles of the Creed, knew any thing of Christ, or an eternal life; that the missionaries are careless, and do not take any right course for their conversion; that among so many thousands of Indians who are said to be Christians, it was a rare thing to meet with any who owned Christ, but all like those Ephesians whom St. Paul mentions not to have heard whether there be an Holy Ghost, might answer, we have not heard whether there be a Christ; and this small progress he imputes to the carelessness and evil examples of those who are sent thither, who took no pains to that end, so that though the ancient priests were suitable to their calling, yet the missionaries were so unworthy, that they destroyed more souls than they gained or converted. So little did they make it their business to make them Christians, that “they permit them to pray and worship before their ancient idols, so they direct their intention to a little image of Christ,

* Ricaut's State of the Greek and Armenian Churches, p. 451. Lond. 1679, 8vo.

† Acosta. de Procur. Indor. Salut. lib. 4. c. 3. Post annos jam quadraginta, ab Evangelii ingressu, in tam immensa turba, vix quemquam qui symboli duo capita intelligat; quid Christus sit, quid vita æterna, &c. Tota Catechizandi ratio umbratilis et ludicræ similis.—Mihi sane monstri simile semper visum est, inter tot millia Christianorum nomine donatorum, tam esse rarum qui Christum agnoscat, ut quod Ephesii olim de Spiritu sancto, Paulo responderunt, possint hi de Christo melius usurpare, neque an sit Christus audivimus. Id. lib. 5. c. 2.—Invenies tam tenuis et inopis messis apud Indos potentissimam causam in eo esse, quod divinis et occultis quidem sed justis consiliis, antiquis Gentibus prædicatores fuerint prædicatione sua digni, cum nostri tam sint plerique indigni, ut longe plus evertant et dissipent quam ædificent, atque plantent. Id. lib. 4. c. 4. See more out of the same Author, ap. Hospin. Histor. Jesuit, p. 231. [Tig. 1670.]

or some saint which they have under their clothes ;”* against which the congregation of Cardinals *de propaganda fide*, published a decree, July 6, 1646, which considerations made one of their own communion affirm,† “ that they are the strangest conversions in the world, that they take no care at all to instruct these people, or to teach them any thing ; they baptize them only without explaining to them the virtue of that sacrament, or what it signifies ; nay, without turning them from their former idolatry.” These now are their conversions, neither are they any better in that part of the Indies subject to the Mogul, where they have indeed spilt the water of baptism upon some few faces (saith one who lived in a public employment some years there),‡ working upon the necessity of some poor men, who for want of means which they give them, are content to wear crucifixes, but for want of knowledge in the doctrine of Christianity are only in name Christians. So that the Jesuits’ congregations there are very thin, consisting of some Italians which the Mogul entertains to cut his diamonds ; and of other European strangers which come thither, and some few natives. And yet the Christian religion is tolerated there,§ and the priests of all religions very much esteemed by the people. Much the same account is given of the converts in Japan, that besides reading *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria*, and some prayers to saints, they have little or no knowledge of religion. ||

Nor are these remote converts only in such a miserable condition, but to come a little nearer home, if we look upon the proselytes in France, we shall find their case very little better, if not worse ; for so little are they instructed,¶ that two hundred peasants came at once to the Intendant of their province, complaining, that since their conversion they knew not what prayers to make, for they had been forbidden their old prayers, and were not taught any other ; nay, they are so unwillingly of that profession, that upon *Corpus Christi* day, 1686, many of them chose rather to pay a fine, than put up hangings before their houses for the procession ;** and yet we hear daily

* Provincial Letters, p. 83, 84. [Lond. 1657.] and Moral Practices of the Jesuits, p. 390. [Lond. 1670.]

† Sure and Honest Means, &c. p. 82. [Lond. 1687.]

‡ Terry’s Voyage to East India, p. 450. Lond 1655, 8vo.

§ Ibid. p. 440.

|| Ogilby’s Japan, p. 262. [Lond. 1670.]

¶ Last Efforts, p. 291. [Lond. 1682.]

** Nouvelle de la Repub. des Lettres, Juin 1686.—Dans la dernière fête Dieu plusieurs ont mieux aimé payer une Amende que de tendre devant leurs Maisons.

brags of these converts, which are such as we should be ashamed of, and so would any other Church but that which glories in her shame.

But as they triumph mightily in conversions which were never made, and *converts* not instructed, not really altered, but only frightened for a time ; so upon every little occasion they raise as loud reports of the accession of whole nations to their Church, wherein they are a little more ingenious than in those which had no ground at all.

Thus when several bishops of Lithuania and Russia Nigra (in the year 1595,)* in hopes of restoring themselves to some honours in the diet of Poland, which by means of the Jesuits they were deprived of, sent two of their number to Rome to offer their submission and obedience to Clement VIII. then Pope ; there was and is yet great boastings of those churches being reconciled to Rome, “ though their going thither in the name of the *Ruthenic Churches* was protested against by Constantine Duke of Ostorovia, and the rest of the Greek Church, who resolved to continue in obedience to the Patriarch of Constantinople.”

I could give more instances of this nature, but I refer them to another chapter ; and conclude this point of feigned conversions, with a known passage of the Intendant Marillac’s in France, by which we may learn what credit to give to the reports of this nature, when they have the confidence to affirm such a thing of a person of honour in public, and before his own face ; yet did that persecutor of the Protestants in Poitou, one day dining with the Marquess of Verac,† give order that the inhabitants of the place should assemble at the cross ; where he went after dinner, and getting upon the steps of the cross, told the people in the Marquess’s presence, that the King required them all to turn Roman Catholics, which he exhorted them to do, by telling them that their Lord the Marquess was there come along with him to change his religion ; which bold and impudent untruth the noble gentleman immediately contradicted, by assuring the people of the contrary, and that he had no desire to change his religion. After this what credit can be given to these men’s reports in private ? The affinity between the slandering the persons of

* Smith’s Account of the Greek Church, p. 242, 243. [Lond. 1680.] and his Narratio de vita Cyrilli Lucarii, p. 6. inter ejus Miscellanea. [Lond. 1686.]

† Last Efforts, [ut supra.] p. 134, 135.

our divines, and misrepresenting the doctrines of our Church leads me to expose that unchristian artifice, but because the charge of disloyalty is advanced with great confidence against us, and of great moment, I shall give that a chapter by itself.

CHAP. IV.

THEIR ACCUSING US OF DISLOYALTY.

It is one of the directions given by the Jesuit Contzen,* to traduce such as oppose their designs, as men that are enemies to the public peace, which advice Seignior Ballarini,† in his letter to Father Young, thinks most proper to be followed, for the better managing the Popish interest in England, to asperse the bishops and ministers of the Church, as so factious that it were well they were removed.

And that the missionaries are at this day observing those directions, is so evident, that it would be time and pains spent to no purpose to prove it: hence we have had a new test of the Church of England's loyalty,‡ an instance of the same,§ and such scurrilous and weak pamphlets sent abroad in the world, either to create an ill opinion of our loyalty, or to exasperate the members of our Church, and provoke them to some undecent carriage, endeavouring to find some failure on their part, that they may catch at an occasion to make the world believe that they have forfeited|| that protection his Majesty hath so graciously promised to afford them.

But our loyalty hath a better foundation than to be shaken by such malicious arts, it being founded upon the same bottom with our Church, the Apostles and Prophets, and our blessed Saviour, the chief corner-stone of the building, which all the arts of men and devils shall never overthrow,—not upon the will of man as theirs is.

Yet these gentlemen think it sufficient to prove us disloyal, to cull out a few instances of men of rebellious practices; and this they charge upon the Church of England, but with what

* Lib. 2. cap. 18. sect. 6. [Mogunt. 1620.]

† Unreasonableness of Separation, Preface, [ut supra,] p. 22.

‡ New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty, Lond. 1687, 4to.

§ Instance of the Church of England's Loyalty, Lond. 1687, 4to.

|| New Test of the Church of England's Loyalty, p. 8.

justice let the world judge. They cry out upon us as misrepresenters of their doctrines, because we affirm they teach the deposing power to rest both in the Pope and in the people, and shew their practices to accord with that doctrine, *whenever they had occasion*: if this be to misrepresent, what name may we call their dealing by, who charge us with rebellion, when we freely condemn all such practices, and that openly; and that in our religion there is no rule to be found that prescribeth rebellion, nor anything that dispenseth subjects from the oath of their allegiance, nor any of our Churches that receive that doctrine. When on their side several *General Councils* have asserted, above *twenty* of their Popes pronounced that right inherent in them, and I am able to prove that above three hundred of their divines defend and plead for either the Pope's or people's power to depose their princes.

And though I know there are many in that Church, who (at least at present) do heartily disown that doctrine, yet I will not stick to affirm that it hath all the characters of an article of faith, nor doth the dissent of so many hinder it from being so, for there are multitudes among them who disown transubstantiation, others the Pope's supremacy, and several other points which others among them acknowledge to be articles of their faith.

* Neither will a late author's plea, that if it were such an article, the opposers of it would not escape without a brand of heresy, prove the contrary; for we know that they have been often marked with that brand, and are once a year *excommunicated* at Rome in the *Bulla Cœnæ*;† wherein all persons who hinder the clergy in exercising their jurisdiction, according to the decrees of the Council of Trent (which France does), all secular powers who call any ecclesiastical person to their courts, all princes that lay any taxes on their people without the Pope's consent, are declared excommunicate, and if they remain so a whole year they shall be declared heretics.

We are told by one of themselves,‡ “that a doctrine when inserted in the body of the canon-law, becomes the doctrine of their Church:” now in the canon-law we find it asserted

* Reflections on the Answer to the Papists misrepresented, p. 10. Lond. 1685, 4to.

† Sure and Honest Means, [ut supra,] p. 88.

‡ Father Ellis's Sermon before the King, Dec. 5, 1686, p. 21. St Gregory's judgment is become that of the whole Church, being inserted in the body of the canon-law.

that the Pope may absolve persons from their oath of allegiance,* that Pope Zachary deposed the King of France,† not so much for his crimes, as that he was unfit to rule; that we are absolved‡ from all oaths to an excommunicate person, and it is our duty to yield no obedience to him. That clergymen§ ought not to swear allegiance to their prince,|| and that they are exempt from the jurisdiction of the secular magistrate. And the Council of Trent¶ hath confirmed all these canons, to the observations of which** all their priests and dignified men are sworn: let the world then judge whether this doctrine be an article of faith or no.

But they have not only taught and established this treasonable principle upon the same foundation with their other doctrines, but though often called upon to join in a denial of it, and to condemn it as sinful, they could never be prevailed on to clear themselves from such an odious charge as hath been all along justly brought against them. This was once thought the only way they had to justify themselves, by a person who hath since made himself a member of their Church, who tells us: "It is not sufficient for the well-meaning Papist to produce the evidences of their loyalty to the late king (Charles the First). I will grant their behaviour to have been as loyal and as brave as they can desire, but that saying of their Father Cressy is still running in my head, that they may be dispensed with in their obedience to an heretic prince, whilst the necessity of the times shall oblige them to it, for that (as another of them tells us) is only the effect of Christian prudence; but when once they shall get power to shake him off, an heretic is no lawful king, and consequently to rise against him is no rebellion. I should be glad therefore that they would follow the advice

* Gratian. Can. 15, Quæ. 6. Can. Auctoritatem.—Edit. 1518, 4to. [p. 656. Colon. 1670.] A fidelitatis etiam juramento Romanus Pontifex nonnullos absolvit.

† Id. Ibid. Can. alius. [Ibid. p. 657.]

‡ Id. Ibid. Can. nos sanctorum. [Ibid.]

§ Id. distinct. 63. fol. 90.

|| Id. fol. 135. col. 3. lit. h.

¶ Decernit et præcipit sacros Canones et Concilia generalia omnia, nec non alias Apostolicas sanctiones in favore Ecclesiasticarum personarum, libertatis Ecclesiasticæ et contra ejus violatores editas, etc. sess. 25. c. 20. [vol. 11. p. 917. Lut. Par. 1672.]

** Bulla Pii 4ti. super forma juram. profess. fidei. They are enjoined to swear thus, Omnia tradita a sacris canonibus indubitanter recipio, atque profiteor, et contraria omnia damno, rejicio et anathematizo. [Ibid. p. 946.]

which was charitably given them by a reverend prelate of our Church : *that they would join in a public act of disowning and detesting those Jesuitic principles, and subscribe to all doctrines which deny the Pope's authority of deposing kings, and releasing subjects from their oath of allegiance.*"* And a late author† of their own Church judges this so necessary, that he affirms, "*No clergyman ought to be received without subscribing the condemnation of the bull De Coena Domini ; and till the monks and Jesuits shall solemnly renounce and condemn it, it will be no great injustice done them, to accuse them of attempting against the lives of kings. If any man did suspect me to be an Arian, and I knew it, and could justify myself from such cursed opinions, and did it not; the world would have reason to impute to me all the consequences of this pernicious heresy ;*" and the same author tells us, "*it is well known all the monks, and especially the Jesuits, have by their fourth vow obliged themselves to the execution of this infernal bull.*"

Nor is it only by private men they have been exhorted to such a renunciation of those doctrines, but in public courts of justice both in France and England. It is indeed very usual with them to deny this doctrine in discourse, but that it is only a formal denial, when they really maintain it, I offer to prove against them from their own principles and practices; a plain instance whereof Mr. Sheldon‡ gives us of his own knowledge : "*who was one morning denied absolution by a Sussex Jesuit, because he would not acknowledge the Pope's power to depose princes : and yet the very same day at dinner, in the presence of several, this Jesuit denied any such power in the Pope.*"

But the doctors at Rome have been very careful to provide against any such scrupulous persons as cannot persuade themselves of the lawfulness of this point, and therefore have found out a way to discharge the conscience from any guilt, and set men at liberty to follow an opinion which they believe unsound; upon which principle there is no manner of security from such men, for they may declare their judgment of the unlawfulness of any action, and yet do it the next moment by virtue of the rare engine of *probability*, by which they can do any thing in that Church.

For it is a doctrine taught by almost all their divines, and

* Mr. Dryden's *Religio Laici*, in the preface, Lond. 1682, 4to.

† *Sure and Honest Means*, [ut supra,] p. 100, 101.

‡ *Sheldon of the Miracles of the Church of Rome*, [ut supra,] p. 186.

insinuated into the people's minds by the confessors, *that the authority of a learned doctor makes an opinion probable, and that every one without hazarding his soul may follow what opinion he pleases, provided that it be taught by some eminent doctor : yea, he is obliged to follow the opinion of his confessor if he be learned, and if he do not he sins.* And when the author of the Provincial Letters complained of this doctrine, his Answerers* *defended it for lawful and orthodox.*

Now, as one of their own Church observes,† the Generals of Orders can raise whole legions of divines to speak what they have a mind should pass for probable ; but there is no need of it in this case, where so many Councils, Popes, and so many hundred doctors, have maintained the treasonable doctrines we charge upon them ; which according to them is a sufficient warrant for any to reduce these speculations into practice, as hath been asserted by them in this very case, and with reference to his late Majesty ; for when Father Walsh pressed the Irish clergy to subscribe the loyal formulary, Father John Talbot and others told him, “*That it was to no purpose to expect any profession, declaration, or oath of allegiance from them, being it was in point of conscience lawful enough for such as would or did take such oath, to decline from, retract, and break it, even the very next day or next hour after having taken it ; provided only they followed herein the doctrine of probability, that is, if they followed any divines who hold such an oath to be unsafe and unsound in catholic religion, or otherwise unlawful or sinful.*”‡ And by the same argument did the Romish bishop of Ferns, in the year 1666, defend all that was done in the Irish rebellion, and refuse to acknowledge it any sin ; because (saith he), “the authority of those who teach the contrary is great, their learning great, their sanctity great, the light they had from God great, and their number great.”§

I might instance in a great number of such doctrines confirmed by the highest authority among them, but I think this sufficient to let the world see how confidently the missionaries attempt to cast the odium of disloyalty upon us, whose doctrines disallow and detest all such principles as damnable and

* Answer to the Provincial Letters, p. 34, 35. [Par. 1659.]

† The Jesuits' Reasons unreasonable.—See it in Collection of Treatises concerning the Penal Laws, p. 110. Lond. 1675, 4to.

‡ History of the Irish Remonstrance, p. 567. [Lond. 1674.]

§ See his Letter in the History of the Irish Remonstrance. [Ibid.] p. 624.

heretical, which for many hundred years they have maintained with the greatest vigour.

But that Church is too politic to content herself with teaching such doctrines only, for she hath provided such means for putting them in practice, in any country whatsoever, as were too subtle for any other politicians to invent; to which end she obliges all her clergy to a single life, that so they may continue in a more absolute subjection: this could not be hoped for while they were married, and the princes and several states of Christendom had such a pawn of their fidelity as their wives and children: therefore having raised the esteem of the clergy that their persons were counted sacred and liable to no punishment, that there might be nothing so nearly related to them wherein they might be punished as their wives and children, they have prohibited marriage to them all; by which means, being ready for any desperate attempt, they have such multitudes of them as are sufficient to make a good army in most prince's dominions. But it is not the clergy alone who are thus at their devotion, but by dispensations* and tolerations to be administrators of abbeyes and bishoprics, and other benefices given to laymen, they oblige them to uphold their interest: "as for their religious orders, they (especially the Jesuits) give their generals an account of all occurrences of state in those provinces and kingdoms whereof they are the respective assistants; to which end they have correspondents in the principal cities of all kingdoms; who sending all their information to the general,† they balance the interests of every prince, and then resolve that the affairs of such a prince shall be promoted, the designs of another opposed, as is most for their own advantage; to effect which, the confessors of great men give intelligence of the inclinations of those whose consciences are unfolded to them; whereby they become acquainted with all determinations concluded in the most secret councils; and have a particular account of the power, possessions, expense and designs of every prince of their communion; and the very same advantage they make of confession, by diving into the people's inclinations, and thereby discovering who stand well affected to their prince, who dissatisfied and exasperated, by which means they sow discord between princes and their subjects, rendering them odious to and fearful of one another, wherever they find their advantage

* Europ. Spec. p. 59. [Lond. 1687.]

† Discovery of the Jesuits in relation to their Politics. [Lond. 1658.]

by such distrusts ;” thus knowing all the discontented people in a state, they are able at any time to raise a party, and being acquainted with the prince’s designs, they know how to defeat them, that the insurrection may be more successful.

But Mr. Pulton* tells us, “that it is expressly prohibited the Jesuits to speak of the deposing power even in private discourses ;” but it is then to be observed, that the doctrine itself is not blamed, only silence imposed concerning it ; this order was made in the year 1616, since which several of that Society have defended that point, and even in Rome itself, where Sanctarellus’s book† that pleads for it was printed, anno 1625, and that it was only for France, is affirmed by a Papist, who answers this objection of Mr. Pulton’s when the Jesuits asserted, “that by that order they were bound under pain of damnation not to speak of that subject, that none in the Church were bound under the like penalty not to teach it but they ;” wherein he observes, their immodesty in the assertion, when none of their rules bind under so much as a venial sin ; and their concession that none in the Church think it damnable to teach that the Pope may depose princes.

I suppose that Mr. Pulton was conscious of his imposing upon the world in this point, therefore he presently shifts from that to lay a grievous charge at our door ;‡ “that it was manifest from history, that the Reformers had deposed and endeavoured to depose more princes in the space of one hundred and fifty years, than the Roman Catholics had done in 1600,” wherein he hath backed that hardy assertion of the author of *Philanax Anglicus*,§ who affirmed, “that in the last century there have been more princes deposed and murdered for their religion by Protestants, than have been in all the other since Christ’s time by the *attempts and means of Roman Catholics*.”

If it were not that I know Mr. Pulton’s skill in history to be very mean, I should look upon him as the most immodest man that ever wrote, who, after the confutation of the other’s assertion, hath the face to renew it again, and publish it to the world ; but when I consider it is want of knowledge in history that makes him so bold, I am willing to excuse him, upon that

* In his Account, p. 17. [Lond. 1687.]

† Jesuits’ Reasons unreasonable, [ut supra,] p. 112, 113.

‡ In his Account, [ut supra,] p. 18.

§ Vindication of the Sincerity of the Protestant Religion, p. 116. Lond. 1679, 4to.

account, from wilful imposture, though all the world cannot clear him from strange rashness and confidence.

I will therefore bate him all but *near two hundred years*, and undertake to prove, whenever called to do it, *that the Romanists' treasons, owned by their Popes and great men, since the Reformation, do far outnumber all the plots and insurrections they can lay to the Protestant charge, which notwithstanding have been condemned by the whole body of our divines.*

Mr. Pulton himself affirmed to Mr. Cressener, that all good princes ought to consent to the decisions of the Church; to which it being returned, what if princes have no mind to part from their right in obedience to the Church's decrees, must they be dispossessed against their will? he asserted, *that in such a case the Church hath power to decide in favour of itself.** This relation had been given the world of their discourse before Mr. Pulton published his remarks, in which he doth not once deny this passage, though he makes reflections upon others in Mr. Cressener's Vindication.

But Mr. Pulton is not alone in this opinion, for there is a certain Jesuit, who highly brags of the loyalty of his Church, that very lately affirmed in my hearing, "that in case of oppression of the subjects by their prince, it is but reasonable that the Pope, being the common father of Christendom, should have a power to depose or otherways punish the oppressor;" and another great stickler for that Church, a convert, never attempted to clear his Church of this charge, "it being very plain," as he affirmed, "that such a power must reside somewhere, and the Pope was certainly the fittest to be intrusted with it." And, indeed, I cannot see how men of any ingenuity can condemn it, when they pretend the Pope's approbation of M. de Meaux's book is a clear evidence that the doctrine contained in it is the doctrine of their Church; for (not to mention at present the actions of former Popes) this very Pope, who approved that book, doth at this time notoriously assert his power over kings, by excommunicating his Majesty of France in the matter of the franchises, thereby approving of that doctrine as much as the Bishop's, and giving us the same authority for the deposing power that the Papists pretend for that Prelate's Exposition.

Let Mr. Pulton, or any for him, make good his bold slander

* Cressener's Vindication, p. 14. Lond. 1687, 4to.

against our Church, and find so many treasons and rebellions in the Protestant communion, if he can, as I will undertake to prove upon the Romanists. Affirming confidently is a talent possessed by most of the missionaries, but proving what they affirm is beneath them: *there have been above six and fifty open rebellions raised and parricides committed upon great princes in about one hundred and sixty years, and eighty-two bulls, indulgences, and supplies of the Popes for the furtherance of those treasons, besides an infinite number of horrid conspiracies*; upon which I cannot but observe, "that at the beginning of the Reformation they owned these doctrines publicly, and till the Pope gave them leave, would never pay obedience to our princes, but by all the traitorous conspiracies imaginable endeavoured to depose and murder them; they had the Pope's bulls and resolution of many universities to satisfy their consciences, which may be well put into the balance with the late decrees of the Sorbonne against the deposing power; for if their decrees of late be evidence enough to acquit the Roman Catholics from the imputation of disloyal principles, as some affirm they are,* then surely so many decrees of the *same faculty* defending those principles, so many censures of other universities passed upon the opposers of them, and so many *bulls* and *breves* of *Popes* to the same purposes, may well justify us in affirming that there is no security of their obedience any longer than the Pope pleases."

Till he forbade them, they took the oath of allegiance and defended it, but ever since have refused it with a strange obstinacy; and what security is there that his orders shall not have the same obedience rendered to them in other points? Nay, since that, we have seen the Romanists of Ireland, who before were ready to subscribe the Remonstrance, decline giving the King any assurance of their obedience, because the Pope commanded them not to do it.†

Could they have been prevailed on to renounce these doctrines as sinful and unlawful, they would have at least shewn that at present their principles were such as become faithful subjects; but when they cannot be persuaded to do this, all their profession that it is not their doctrine, gives no assurance of their loyalty.

But if they should do this, it is well observed by a late

* Answer to two main Questions of the Letter to a Dissenter, p. 10. [Lond. 1687.]

† See History of the Irish Remonstrance.

writer, "that while they found their loyalty upon this supposition, that the deposing doctrine is not the doctrine of the Roman Church, doth not this hypothesis afford a shrewd suspicion that, if it were the doctrine of the Church of Rome, or ever should be so, or they should ever be convinced that it is so, then they would be for the deposing of princes, no less than those who, at this day, believe it to be the doctrine thereof?"*

"And I wonder how the gentlemen of that Church can allege the decrees of the Sorbonne as an evidence that they hold not the doctrine of the deposing power; for the *same faculty*, August 9th, 1681, and the 16th of the same month, *approved the oath of allegiance*, and condemned the Pope's temporal power over princes as heretical,† and yet our English Romanists will not take the oath, nor be persuaded to condemn the deposing power, though they pretend to disclaim it."

And indeed it would be folly to expect that the decree of one single faculty should be of more authority than the bulls of so many Popes and Canons of Councils, the supreme heads of the Roman Church.

But (as I observed before) it is more strange to hear these men affirm, that the doctrine contained in the Bishop of Condom's Exposition is the doctrine of their Church, and yet deny that the deposing power is so, when "all the authority that Exposition hath, is from the *Pope and Cardinals'* approbation, which in a more solemn manner hath been often given to that doctrine; so that either their argument for the Bishop's book concludes nothing, or it is an evident *demonstration* that *the Roman Catholic Church teaches the doctrine of deposing princes.*"

I offer to prove against them, "that the Pope's power in that point was universally believed as a matter of faith in that Church for near five hundred years: now let them answer this argument, nothing can be believed as a matter of faith, but what was taught them by their Fathers, and so upward from the Apostles' times; but the doctrine of the deposing power was believed as a matter of faith; therefore it was delivered from the Apostles' times." Let them either answer this argument, which is their own upon other points, or confess that the deposing power is an article of faith in that Church; for

* Request to Roman Catholics, p. 38. Lond. 1687, 4to.

† Walsh's Letters, p. 557, 558, 559. [Lond. 1686.]

if the argument be good, it proves that to be an article of faith as well as others ; if it be not, they give up all their brags of the evidence of oral tradition from hand to hand, so much insisted on by Mr. G. and others of their champions among us.

But because it may be objected, that the deposing bulls were the effects of the passionate tempers of those Popes, I desire that one of their own communion may be heard in that point, who speaks thus : “ I maintain that all these disasters proceeded not only from the pettish humour of any one Pope, but were the natural effects of the principles of the Papacy ; and though we do not see it visibly break forth every day by some bloody example, yet we ought not to believe that the habit or the will is ever the less, but that there is some external extraordinary reason which suspends the action, and which doth sometimes make them act directly contrary to their own inclination.”* *How can any man maintain that princes need not stand in fear of the Pope, when three Popes of this present age have condemned the opinion that the Pope cannot depose kings as wicked and contrary to the faith ?*

And now I have examined and refuted their calumny of our disloyalty in general, and Mr. Pulton's charge in particular, which I have known asserted by others with so peculiar a confidence, that it has staggered many loyal but weak Protestants, in which, as in *all* the rest of this *discourse*, “ *I once again challenge the whole body of the Romish clergy to find one false quotation ;*” and by the falsity of Mr. Pulton's assertion I beg the reader to judge what credit the rest of their defaming insinuations deserve.

CHAP. V.

OF THEIR LAYING DOCTRINES TO OUR CHARGE WHICH WE NEVER TAUGHT.

AFTER such a bold assertion as that of Mr. Pulton's, which I refuted in the preceding chapter, we need not wonder if we meet with the same treatment which the Christians in Tertullian's time underwent,† seeing we have to do with a sort of

* Sure and Honest Means, p. 69, 70. [ut supra.]

† Tertullian. Apolog. c. 7, &c. Dicimur sceleratissimi, de Sacramento infanticidii, pabulo inde et post convivium incesto, quod eversores luminum canes, lenones scilicet tenebrarum et libidinum impiarum in verecundia procurent, &c. [p. 7. Par. 1695.]

men who repeat their slanders the oftener they are exposed, and are not ashamed to impute doctrines to the Reformed which their confessions disclaim, and the writings of their divines confute.

At a time when the gentlemen of that communion make so loud complaints of being misrepresented as to their doctrines and practices, and with the utmost of their rhetoric exaggerate the injury which by such misrepresentations is done to truth and their Church : it might rationally be expected that they should believe what they say, and have some sense of such unjust proceedings : or at least should in policy take care that their own writings be not stuffed with false charges against their adversaries.

But it is somewhat surprising to find no care taken in so material a point, and that they are no more solicitous to represent our doctrines right, than to defend their own, which they seem wholly to abandon ; if any pains be taken by them, it is to bespatter the Protestants, and coin opinions for them ; “ for they find it much more easy to refute those imaginary positions, than overthrow the well-grounded tenets of the Reformed Churches.”

Hence it is that there is no calumny so absurd which they blush to publish : and that the old charge against the Waldenses and Albigenses is renewed by the author of *Popery Anatomized*,* who copies from the Jesuit Parsons,† affirming, “ that they denied the resurrection of the dead, and that there is any such place as hell ; that with the Manichees they held two Gods, and that it avails a man nothing to say his prayers ; with several other doctrines of a horrid nature.” But if we consult the authors that wrote in and near the time, we shall find a quite contrary account ;‡ that “ they were to all appearance a very pious people, living righteously before men, and believing all things rightly concerning God, and all the Articles of the Creed ; and that their lives were more holy than other Christians ;§ insomuch that when the King of France||

* *Popery Anatomized*, p. 15. [Lond. 1686.]

† In his *Three Convers. of England*, p. 3. c. 3. Edit. 1604, 8vo.

‡ Rainer. contra Wald. c. 4. [Ingolst. 1618.] *Hæc secta magnam habet speciem pietatis, eo quod coram hominibus juste vivant, et bene omnia de Deo credant, et omnes Articulos quæ in Symbolo continentur.*

§ Claud. Seiss. adver. Wald. p. 9. [Par. 1520.] *Puriorem quam cæteri Christiani vitam agunt.*

|| Joh. Camer. p. 419. *Illi ad Regem referunt illis in locis homines baptizari, Articulos fidei et Decalogum doceri, Dominicos dies religiose coli,*

sent commissioners to inquire of, and inspect their life and doctrine, and they informed him, that they baptized, and taught the Articles of the Creed and precepts of the Decalogue, observed the Lord's Day, preached the Word of God, and that they were not guilty of those abominable crimes imputed to them; he *swore* that *they were better than he or his people, who were Catholics.*"

But though the Romanists have no authority for their charge, yet they have a motive which is always prevalent in that Church. The Waldenses had with great freedom reformed the vices of the Pope and clergy; "and this was the chief thing which subjected them to such an universal hatred, and caused several wicked opinions to be fathered upon them, which they never owned." For they agreed with the faith of the Protestants at this day, as Popliniere affirms, who allegeth the acts of a disputation* between the Bishop of Pamiers and Arnoltot, minister of Lombres, written in a language savouring much of the Catalan tongue; affirming that "some had assured him that the articles of their faith were yet to be seen engraven in certain old tables in Alby, agreeing exactly with the Reformed Churches:" and Mr. Fountain, minister of the French Church at London, told Archbishop Usher, that "in his time a Confession of the Albigenses was found, which was approved of by a Synod of French Protestants."

Thus, as the Romanists have brought most of the heathen rites and the ceremonious part of their worship into theirs, so they seem to be actuated by the same spirit which taught the Pagans to represent our holy religion in the most odious manner; and they have found such success attending this unchristian artifice, that it is hugged as their darling, and when any party discovers their corruptions, they endeavour to expose them as men of seditious principles, which will effectually render princes jealous of them, and draw upon them the displeasure of those under whose protection they might otherwise be secure; that the common people may entertain as great an aversion to them, it is not only their practice, but a principle of their policy, laid down by a famous Jesuit,† to

Dei verbum exponi, veneficia et stupra apud eos nulla esse. His auditis Rex jurejurando addito; me, inquit, et cætero populo meo Catholico meliores illi viri sunt.

* Usher's Life and Letters, p. 14. [Lond. 1686.] Letter to Mr. Tho. Lydiat.

† Carpentur primum illa quæ in vulgus male audiunt, quæque absur-

charge them with such opinions as are absurd in themselves and abhorred by all men.

By this means they are sure to possess the vulgar with such prejudices, that they will lend no ear to the other side, whom they look upon as a sort of monsters, according to the character these politicians have given of them. And such opinions being easily confuted if they can but once persuade an ignorant Protestant, that the Church of which he is a member holds them, there needs no great industry to prevail with such a man to leave it.

This course the Popish Bishop of Ferns in Ireland took to persuade Father Andrew Sall, who had left the Jesuits, among whom he had continued many years, and about sixteen years since became a member of our Church, to return to the Romish communion; insomuch that Father Walsh* confesses, "that he had strangely misrepresented the Church of England in his book against that convert."

But I think never did any of their writers equal Father Porter,† reader of divinity in the college of St. Isidore at Rome, who this year in a book printed there, and dedicated to the Earl of Castlemain, and licensed by the Companion of the Master of the sacred Palace, and others, as "a book very useful for the instruction of the faithful;" tells us, "that the God of the Protestants‡ doth not differ from the devil, nor his heaven from hell; and that the whole frame of our religion is founded in this horrid blasphemy, *that Christ is a false prophet*;"§ which he attempts to prove by another misrepresentation as great as this; "for," saith he, "the English Confession of Faith|| asserts, that General Councils *guided by the Holy Ghost and the Word of God may err*;"¶ for which he cites the nineteenth and twentieth Articles of our Church;¶ the latter of which only "asserts that the Church ought to be guided in

ditatem primo aspectu etiam rudibus ostendunt, Contz. Politic. Sec. 8. c. 18. p. 8. [Mogunt. 1620.]

* Walsh's Letters, [ut supra,] p. 78.

† Securis Evangelica. Romæ, 1687, 8vo.

‡ Colligitur Deum Religionis reformatæ non differre a Diabolo, nec ejus paradisum ab inferno, p. 151.

§ [Ibid.] P. 130. Structura Religionis reformatæ fundatur in hac horrenda blasphemia, Christum esse falsum Prophetam.

|| Ibid.—Confessio Angliæ, art. 19. et art. 20. dicit Concilia Generalia, gubernata a spiritu sancto, possunt errare.

¶ Rogers's Faith, Doctrine and Religion professed in England, Cambr. 1681. 4to.

her decisions by the Word of God ;” and though the former doth affirm, that the Church of Rome hath erred, yet it says nothing of General Councils ; the twenty-first Article indeed affirms, that they may err, and the reason it gives is “because they are an *assembly of men who are not all guided by the Spirit and Word of God ;*” so that all this friar’s exclamation of the horridness of such a doctrine, as he charged upon us, serves only to shew his own immodesty, and to let the world see with what strange confidence some men can advance assertions, and allege authorities which any one that can read, will discover to be forged.

This I confess seems to be a new charge of his own inventing, but that which he brings in another place,* “that we are not obliged by our religion to pray,” was long since framed by the priests at the beginning of the Reformation, who persuaded the people,† “that in England the Protestants had neither churches nor form of religion, nor served God any way ;” and they had so possessed them with that opinion, that “several persons were reckoned Lutherans only because they were horrid blasphemers.”

That the “Decalogue is not obligatory to Christians, and that God doth not regard our works,” is one of the monstrous opinions which Campion‡ had the confidence to tell both our Universities was maintained by the Church of England ; and like a child, who to cover one untruth backs it with another, he quotes the Apology of the Church of England as his voucher, wherein these words are found, (which are so clear that they alone are enough to make those blush, who, by translating and publishing this treatise of Campion’s the last year, have made his forgeries their own ; the words of the Apology are these:)§ “Although we acknowledge we expect nothing from our own works, but from Christ only, yet this is no encouragement to a

* Secur. Evang. [ut supra,] p. 95.

† Europ. Spec. [ut supra,] p. 134, 136.

‡ Campion’s Reasons, Reas. 8. Lond. 1687, 4to. See it also in the first edition in Latin, Cosmop. 1681. *Norunt isti suorum axiomata, opera nostra Deus nequaquam curat, &c.*

§ Quamvis autem dicamus nihil nobis esse præsidii, in operibus et factis nostris, et omnem salutis nostræ rationem constituamus in solo Christo, non tamen ea causa dicimus, laxè absolute vivendum esse, quasi tingi tantum et credere satis fit homini Christiano, et nihil ab eo aliud expectetur, vera fides viva est, nec potest esse otiosa : ergo docemus populum, Deum nos vocasse ad bona opera ut in eis ambulemus, &c. Corpus Confess. Fidei, p. 98. Gen. 1654, 4to.

loose life, nor for any to think it sufficient to believe, and that nothing else is to be expected from them; for true faith is a living and working faith, therefore we teach the people that God hath called us to good works."

And that the reader may see what credit is to be given to the Romanists in this point, I shall give an account of the doctrine of the several Reformed Churches about the necessity of good works; and then shew with what confidence these gentlemen affirm, "that the Protestants teach that good works are not necessary."

The four imperial cities,* in their Confession of Faith, presented to the Emperor in the year 1530, having explained the doctrine of justification by faith only, have these words:—"But we would not have this understood as if we allowed salvation to a lazy faith, for we are certain that no man can be saved who doth not love God above all things, and with all his might endeavour to be like him: or who is wanting in any good work:" and therefore enjoin their ministers to "preach up frequent prayer and fasting as holy works and becoming Christians," in which the Augustan Confession† agrees with them, that "good works necessarily follow a true faith;" (for even at that time the calumny, that they denied the necessity of them, was very common, as appears by their solemn disclaiming any such opinion in the twentieth Article)‡ affirming, "that he cannot have true faith who doth not exercise repentance."§ The same is taught by the Helvetian Churches|| in their Confession composed at Basil, A.D. 1532, "that true faith shews itself by good works;" and in another, framed at

* Confess. Argentin. c. 4. Nolumus autem hæc sic intelligi, quasi salutem in ignavis animi cogitationibus fideve charitate destituta—ponamus: quandoquidem certi sumus neminem justum aut saluum fieri posse, nisi amet summe Deum, et imitetur studiosissime.—c. 5. Negamus quendam plene posse saluum fieri, nisi huc per spiritum Christi evaserit, ut nihil jam bonorum operum in eo desideretur.—c. 6. Precationes et religiosa jejunia actiones sanctissimas, quæque Christianos plurima doceant, habemus, &c.

† Confess. August. Art. 6. Docent quod cum fide reconciliamur, necessario sequi debeat justitia bonorum operum.

‡ Art. 20. Quod adversarii criminantur nos, negligi a nobis doctrinam de bonis operibus, manifesta calumnia est, &c.

§ Ibid. sec. de bonis operibus. Nec existere fides potest nisi in his qui poenitentiam agunt.

|| Confess. Basil. sive Mylhyssiania, Art. 8.—Hæc (Fides) per opera charitatum se sine intermissione exercet, exercet atque ita probatur.

the same place, A.D. 1536,* we find this assertion, "that faith is productive of all good works."

The Bohemian churches affirm,† that he who doth not exercise repentance shall certainly perish; and that good works are absolutely necessary to salvation, is the doctrine of the Saxon reformers,‡ in their Confession of Faith, offered to the Council of Trent, A.D. 1551; and in that presented to the same Council by the Duke of Wirtemberg, § the following year, there is this profession, "We acknowledge the Decalogue to contain injunctions for all good works, and that we are bound to obey all the moral precepts of it;" "We teach that good works are necessary to be done."|| And in particular it commends fasting,¶ and in the twenty-second article** of the French Confession it is affirmed, "that the doctrine of faith is so far from being an hindrance to a holy life, that it excites us to it, so that it is necessarily attended with good works."

The Church of England agrees with the rest of the Reformed, Article XII. "that good works are acceptable to God, and do necessarily spring out of a true and lively faith." And the confession of faith†† subscribed by all the churches of Helvetia, A.D. 1566, and afterwards by the Reformed of Poland, Scotland, Hungary, and Geneva, gives this account of the faith

* Art. 13. Fides—præclaros omnium fructus pullulat—et est operum foecundissima.

† Confess. Bohe. Art. 5. Docent ut qui in Dei nomine, dum in vivis est, pœnitentiam agere neglexerit, eum malo exitio perdendum.

‡ Confess. Saxon. Art. De nova obedientia.—Necessaria est cura vitandi tales lapsus. Hæc manifesta necessitas, proposita summa pœna si quos non movet ad bene operandum.

§ Confess. Wirtemb. Art. de Lege. Agnoscimus legem Dei cujus epitome est decalogus, præcipere optima justissima et perfectissima opera, et hominem obligatum esse ad obediendum moralibus præceptis Decalogi.

|| Ibid. Art. De bonis operibus. Docemus bona opera, divinitus præcepta, necessario facienda esse.

¶ Ibid. Art. de Jejunio. Jejunium sentimus utile esse, etc.

** Confess. Gall. Art. 22. Tantum abest igitur, ut bene sancteque vivendi studium fides extinguat, ut etiam illud cieat et inflammet in nobis, unde bona opera necessaria consequuntur.

†† Confess. Helv. c. 16. Eadem (fides) retinet nos in officio quod Deo debemus et proximo, et in adversis patientiam firmat, et confessionem veram format atque facit; et ut uno verbo omnia dicam, omnis generis bonos fructus et bona opera progignit. Docemus enim vere bona opera enasci ex viva fide.—Quamvis ergo doceamus cum Apostolo, hominem gratis justificari per fidem in Christum et non per ulla bona opera, non ideo tamen vili pendimus, aut condemnamus opera bona.—Damnamus itaque omnes, qui bona opera contemnunt, non curanda et inutilia esse blaterant.

of those churches: "Faith causes us to discharge our duty toward God and our neighbour, makes us patient in adversity, and produces all good works in us, so we teach good works to be the offspring of a lively faith. And although we affirm with the Apostle, that we are justified by faith in Christ, and not by our good works; yet we do not reject them, but condemn all who despise good works, and teach that they are not necessary." And in the thirteenth and fourteenth articles of the Scotch Confession,* they maintain the "necessity of all good works because they are commanded by God;" which is likewise the doctrine of the Dutch churches, as appears by the profession of their faith in the Synod of Dort,† affirming, "that it is impossible that true faith should be without works, seeing it is a faith working by love, which causes a man to do all those good works which God hath commanded in his word." And the same doctrine is delivered in the articles of the Church of Ireland; but because I have not those articles at hand, I omit the words.

Thus by an *universal consent* of all the *Protestants*, we find the *necessity of good works* maintained, and I *challenge our adversaries to produce any one allowed author who holds the contrary among us (which is a unity beyond what they can shew in their Church for any one point)*, though if they could, it would not justify their charge, who so often tell us, "that we must not take the faith of any church from private writings, but their public confessions."

But these gentlemen scorn to be tied by any rules, though never so just, even in their own opinions; and therefore in‡ a Supplication directed to King James by several Romish priests, they affirm, that "whosoever leaveth their communion for ours, beginneth immediately to lead a worse life;" so that it is grown into a proverb, "that the Protestant religion is good to live in, but the Papist religion good to die in." And indeed they made it their business to possess their people with that opinion, so that Father Francis de Neville,§ a Capuchin

* Confess. Scot. Art. 13. Causa bonorum operum, et Art. 14.

† Confess. Eccles. Belgicar. in Synodo Dordr. Art. 24. Fieri non potest ut sancta hæc fides in homine otiosa sit: siquidem non loquimur de fide vana, sed de ea quæ in Scriptura dicitur fides per charitatem efficax; quæ inducit hominem ut illis operibus quæ Deus verbo suo præcepit, sese exerceat.

‡ A Supplication to the King's most excellent Majesty. Lond. 1604, 4to.

§ Reasons of Father Neville's Conversion, Chap. 26. [Lond. 1642.]

confesseth, "that he did imagine for a long time that they of the Reformed Churches admitting justification by faith alone, did it to exclude good works from the way of salvation, and shew themselves in that to be enemies of charity and of other virtues, and did therefore extremely condemn them; but when he came to sound their doctrine, and see how they judge good works necessary to salvation, and that the faith whereof they speak is not a dead faith, but a lively faith, accompanied with good works, he acknowledged they were wrongfully blamed in this, as in many other things also."

But though this gentleman was so sincere, yet there are but few among them who tread in his steps; for to pass by all the controvertists of the last age, we need go no farther than these late years to find instances of their misrepresentation in this particular. One of them,* in a book dedicated to her Majesty, tells the world, "that the principle of our religion takes from us the yoke of fasting, freeth us from all necessity of good works to be saved, and of keeping the commandments of God;" and that we might not think he asserted these only to be consequences of our doctrines, he adds, "that most Protestants hold that position, and that it is our express doctrine;" and in another place he affirms, "that praying, watching, and fasting, are wholly out of use among Protestants, and not only contrary to the liberty of their new Gospel, but even fruitless, vain, superstitious toys, according to the tenets and principles thereof." Another sets it down as one of the Protestant articles,† "that good works are not absolutely necessary to salvation." Which Father Turbervill‡ confirms by being more particular: "The Catholic Church (saith he) teacheth much fasting, prayer, and mortification, she exhorts to good works, voluntary poverty, chastity and obedience; the contrary to all which holy doctrines are taught by Protestants." And a very late author insinuates,§ "that it is all one to Protestants whether God be served with fasting, watching, mortifying, or without:" but the Roman divine, Father Porter,|| is more express, "that one of the causes which renders the Reformed so averse to

* Verit. Evang. p. 41. 108. Lond. 1687, 4to.

† Touchstone of the Reform. Gospel, p. 51. Lond. 1685, 12s.

‡ Manual of Controversies, p. 65. Daway, 1671, 8vo.

§ Use of the Notes of the Church, p. 6. [Lond. 1687.]

|| Secur. Evang. Introd. Sect. 2. [Rom. 1687.] Radices ex quibus horror Catholicorum pullulat, sunt.—Horror jejuniorum et operum pœnitentiæ, pigritia et tædium frequentandi cultum laudesque divinas.

Popery, is that they abhor fasting and repentance, and account prayer and other offices of religion tedious ; that our religion allows us to believe that good works are not necessary to salvation :* that by our doctrine thieves, murderers, blasphemers, &c. may attain heaven *by their being so*, if they will but believe ;† and that *by being such*, they are as much the sons of God as the apostles were ;” with abundance more of such abominable stuff, fit only for carrying on a most malicious design.

When with their best rhetoric these gentlemen have endeavoured to persuade the world, that they are abused in the account given of their doctrines by our divines, all they pretend to complain of amounts to no more than this, “that we have drawn consequences from their doctrines which they will not bear ;” and we find not that their greatest malice can pretend to much more : surely then it is high time for them to reflect a little upon that counsel of our Saviour,‡ first to pull the beam out of their own eye.

It is not for want of materials, but because I would not be prolix, that I produce no more particulars in this point of good works, for I do not remember to have seen any one of their writings which is not guilty in this kind ; I have more need to make an apology for insisting so long upon this one particular, but I was easily induced to do it, knowing that one of their great designs is to possess the devouter sort of men with a belief that we left their communion to have greater liberty for the flesh, in prosecution of which they are so strangely immodest, as to publish such false opinions for us, as directly contradict our public Confessions, the discovering of which I looked upon the best way to oppose their slanders.

But to take a short view of other particulars. The author of *Veritas Evangelica* before cited, runs wholly upon this point, “that we believe the whole Church hath failed,” and thence argues “that Christ had no church for some years.” Into the same error Father Mumford,§ the Jesuit, runs ; and another

* Id. p. 179. Indulget prætensa Reformatio, credere quod bona opera non sint necessaria ad salutem.

† Id. p. 151. Cælum religionis Reformatæ admittit homicidas, adulteros, blasphemos, etc. qua tales, etsi nunquam sua peccata detestati fuerint, modo crediderint. And in another place, p. 107. Ex principiis ejusdem religionis sequitur adulteros, homicidas, idololatrias, qua tales, tam esse filios Dei, quam fuere apostoli, etc.

‡ Matth. vii. 5.

§ Catholic Scriptur. p. 77. [Lond. 1686.]

affirms,* "that we teach the church of all nations is confined to England."

Because we reject all traditions that are not according to the rule of Lirinensis, "received every where, at all times, and by all," Father Porter† lays this down as one of our principles, "that all traditions of all sorts are the inventions of men;" though he could not but know that we receive the Scriptures from such an universal tradition, and are ready to embrace any other doctrine conveyed to us as they are.

With the same sincerity and modesty he affirms that we pretend that the "*express words* of Scripture are our *rule of faith*,‡ without any interpretation or consequence drawn from them;" though (not to mention other churches) the Church of England§ declares that we are to be guided not only by the express words of Scripture, but by the consequences drawn from it; and yet this gentleman affirms that our confessions of faith pretend only to the express words.

It is notoriously known that our differences about church government are no articles of our faith, and yet this author tells us,|| "that the equality of power in the pastors of the Church is one of the fundamental articles of the Reformation." A way of misrepresenting which hath been sufficiently blackened by themselves, so that I need say nothing to expose it.

But to leave this friar, whose whole book consists of little else but as bad or worse assertions, one of their champions¶ would persuade the world, "that we account the belief of transubstantiation to be idolatry;" a cunning artifice to draw the people from considering where the charge is laid, not against the doctrine of the corporal presence, but the adoration of the host. And his fellow advocate** seems resolved not to be behindhand, when he affirms, "that we believe there is nothing to be hoped for of substance in the sacrament."

* Primitive Rule before the Reformation, part 1. p. 7. [Antw. 1663.]

† Secur. Evangel. [ut supra,] p. 10. Quantum Principium. Omnes omnino traditiones sunt inventiones humanæ.

‡ Secur. Evang. Introd. Sec. 4. Sec. 5. Sec. 6. et p. 9. Where under this head, Recensentur præcipua heterodoxæ religionis principia, he reckons that for one.

§ Art. 6.

|| Secur. Evan. p. 26. Omnes pastores Ecclesiæ æqualem habent auctoritatem et potestatem, etc.—Hæc sunt dogmata fidei Reformatae, hæc bases et fundamenta prætensæ Reformationis.

¶ Transubstantiation defended, in the Introduction. [Lond 1687.]

** Answer to a Discourse against Transubstantiation, p. 7. [Lond. 1687.]

We dispute with great earnestness against the idolatrous worship given to angels and saints in that Church, and our adversaries have found it impossible to make a fair defence for it; therefore they betake themselves to prove that those happy spirits pray for us,* which we acknowledge as well as they, and yet a very celebrated writer affirms that we deny it. We profess to believe the article of the communion of saints, but Mr. Ward† hath the assurance to tell the world, that Protestants believe no communion of saints.

Hitherto we have had instances of their direct way of misrepresenting, but they are not so unskilful as not to be furnished with finer methods, and which are not so easily discovered by the vulgar; “when they are eagerly disputing, it is an easy thing to drop some assertion which in the heat of discourse shall pass unheeded by the warm adversary, but they will be sure to resume it (and make their advantage of its not being contradicted), either during the conference or afterwards, to some of the persons then present; which renders it necessary for those who engage with them to watch every word, and not only attend to the main question; for by this method they gain one of these two points; if their insinuation be not answered at first, they will urge the point as granted, and if the disputant deny it, they presently cry out that he is now reduced to a strait, and so denies what he owned before, which observation shall be surely seconded and applauded by their adherents, and often leaves an impression in the weaker hearers: on the other hand, if when they find themselves pressed, and at a stand (which is their usual time to drop such a bye assertion), and that their artifice is discovered, and their position denied, they leave the first point and pursue the other, and so engage insensibly in a desultory dispute from one thing to another, never fixed, by which they render most disputations ineffectual; so that whether stopped in their design or not, they make their advantage, either to misrepresent our doctrine, or extricate themselves from the difficulties they cannot resolve.

Thus one of their divines, urging the authority of the Fathers to a Protestant, and not willing to expose himself so far, as to affirm in express terms that we thought those holy men divinely inspired, used this expression, that seeing we owned the authority of the *Divinely inspired Fathers*, he would prove

* Touchstone of the Reform. Gospel, p. 63, 71. [Lond. 1685.]

† Monomachia, p. 20. [Lond. 1687.]

the infallibility of the Church from their writings: "To this the gentleman not regarding the epithet, answered that he could not, and so proceeded in the dispute: they had not been parted many hours, but the friar desired some of the company to observe how the Protestants contradicted themselves about their rule of faith, professing to receive whatever was inspired by the Holy Ghost, and yet not admitting the writings of the Fathers into the rule, though the opponent had acknowledged that they were inspired from above; and when it was replied that there was no such concession, he urged that when he termed them divinely inspired, there was no exception taken at it, which was a tacit affirming them to be so." But the gentlemen were too wise to be caught with so very slight an appearance.

I shall have occasion to give a farther account of this under another head; therefore I shall at present only observe, that how thin soever this artifice is in itself, they use it in their public discourses, as well as private conversation: Mr. Clench, arguing for the infallibility of Councils, hath these words (speaking of our appeal to the four first General Councils),* "I know no reason why the Church should be credited in the four first General Councils, and slighted and disbelieved in the following: Christ promised he would be with them to the consummation of the world,—I can find no place where Christ promised to be with them for a limited time, so as to direct them in their first assemblies, and to leave them for the future to themselves." Here he would make the reader believe, that "we receive those Synods as believing them secured from error by Christ's promise;" for else his argument is impertinent; but "we do not receive them on any infallible authority of theirs, not because they could not err, but because they did not; and therefore we reject others, because they have erred; for we know of no promise made to them, but are yet ready to receive any such Councils as the first were, who govern themselves by the holy Scriptures."

They find no great difficulty in confuting imaginary opinions, which makes them so very dexterous in this method; to dispute against our doctrine of justification by faith was too hard a task,† and therefore F. T. coins a new definition of it in the middle of his argument, and immediately runs away with

* St. Peter's Supremacy discussed, p. 20. [Lond. 1686.]

† Manual of Controversies, p. 258. [Doway, 1671.]

that, endeavouring to prove that faith is not an assured belief that our sins are forgiven; learnedly arguing against his own imagination: however he had what he aimed at, for he made a show of saying somewhat, and if he could but persuade any ignorant Protestant that the definition was owned by the Reformed, he was sure he had overthrown it.

With the same sincerity another of their champions would insinuate, that “the Protestants left the communion of Rome, because of the wickedness of the members of that Church,”* and therefore heaps up authorities to prove “that it is not a sufficient motive for a separation from them;” but all his labour is to very little purpose, for we know the tares and wheat are to grow together till harvest. and not only the wickedness of their priests and bishops, but the errors and monstrous corruptions of their Church, could not have justified our separation, if they had not endeavoured to force us to be partakers of those abominations, which we durst not do lest we should be partakers of those plagues, which are denounced against them. It was an easy matter to prove the former no ground for separation, but something hard to undertake the other point, so that our author wisely waived it.

It was observed by the Duke of Buckingham,† that “these gentlemen served themselves of hateful nicknames when they are pressed in disputes about religion;” which is another of their artifices to promote the same end; it was long since put in practice by those bishops at Nice, who set up the worship of images, for no sooner were they pressed with a passage out of Eusebius,‡ but they brand him with the title of an Arian; which example hath been since followed by the gentlemen of that communion on purpose to make the world believe that their adversaries held the doctrines those names import: the Nicolaitans are represented in the Revelations as the worst of men, therefore the defenders of priests’ marriages had that name imposed on them, that the common people might think they held the community of wives, as that sect did; and so the opposers of transubstantiation were nicknamed Stercoranists and Panites.

This artifice they made great use of in suppressing the loyal Remonstrance in Ireland, which I gave some account of

* *Nubes Testium*, p. 2. [Lond. 1686.]

† In his Answer to the Spanish Ambassador’s Inform. See the Connexion, p. 143. [Lond. 1681.]

‡ Concil. Nicæn. 2d. Act. 6.

in the former chapter;* the name of Protestant is a most odious appellation among them, therefore Riddere the commissary, in his letter to Cardinal Barberin, styles them Irish Protestants, and the same Cardinal had before called them, the Valesian sect.

The success attending this method hath been so great, that Father Contzen† hath formed it into a rule; and how well it is observed, may be seen by their daily practice. For as Mr. Travers‡ complains, they call us Calvinists, &c. but we content ourselves with the honourable name of Christians: to be a Franciscan, a Thomist, a Scotist, we leave to them who have rent asunder Christ's body, but we have no such custom to name ourselves of any men. It was an old device of the Arians, to call themselves the only true Catholics, and all others Ambrosians, Athanasians, &c. but this is not the only heretical example, after which the Romanists do exactly copy.

The preceding instances are warrant enough for me to renew my requests to the reader, *not to believe them when they affirm that such a particular doctrine is part of the Reformed religion*; for we have seen that they are not over sincere in that matter: if men are found fathering doctrines upon their adversaries, which they abhor as much or more than they; will any man in his wits believe such an imputation coming from those men? But not only the insincerity of the persons, but the deceit of the method itself, ought to make us cautious; for if any particular doctrine were taught by some of our divines, it doth not follow that it is a part of the Protestant religion; if a person be of any particular opinion, he ought not to lay such a stress upon it as to make it part of his religion, for that consists in a few and plain articles, and if the other be overthrown, as long as these remain, the religion remains entire.

I mention this because I have some experience that these gentlemen do not misrepresent our doctrines only to make the world have an ill opinion of them, but to get advantage of engaging with those who hold some particular ill-grounded opinion, that having refuted it, they may seem to have triumphed over a Protestant principle. And this advantage is

* History of the Irish Remonstrance, p. 506, 511. [Lond. 1674.]

† Cont. Pol. p. 97. [Mogunt. 1620.]

‡ Travers's Answer to a Supplicatory Epistle, p. 339, 340. [Lond. 1583.] See the Picture of a Papist, p. 37. [ed. 1606.]

too often given them by unwary men, who presuming on their own abilities, choose rather to defend some private sentiment than the common articles of our faith. An ill cause will not admit of a sound defence, and therefore it is no hard task to overthrow unwarrantable positions: which should make those who deal with them use more care; "for if they should be able to defend their opinion, the truth of the Protestant religion is not one jot more apparent, but the adversaries of it have a plausible pretence to affirm that such a position is one of the doctrines of it; and if it be found incapable of defence, these gentlemen who brag when there is no cause, will triumph unmeasurably, and amuse many ignorant and weak souls."

The sum of all is,* "that having to do with men whose talent at misrepresenting improves daily, it is our indispensable duty to be well acquainted with the particulars of our faith, that neither their eloquence in persuading, their artifice in deforming our doctrine, nor the fame of their abilities, may either put us on defending those doctrines which we do not teach, nor persuade us, that our religion approves them." We have many instances of those who have split upon this rock; *I never met with any of their converts who understood our religion, but having entertained wrong notions of it, were persuaded to change upon the confutation of those imaginary tenets.* "I desire these gentlemen to name any one book of controversy which they think is written with most sincerity on their side, and I engage myself to produce several false imputations in it;" by this trick they find most success, so that if all our people would labour to understand their religion, the Romanists would have but few converts.

* P. 12.

OF
THE INCURABLE SCEPTICISM

OF
THE CHURCH OF ROME.

THE PREFACE.

AMONG the manifold accusations, with which the Papists are wont to defame our most holy religion, there is none which they oftener allege, or more seriously endeavour to evince, or confirm with more plausible arguments, than that whereby they pretend that we utterly overthrow all certainty in divine matters, and consequently faith itself. This is the constant subject of their writings and discourses, this is of late their only argument. To obviate therefore these importunate clamours, I resolved thoroughly to examine the whole argument; and inquire whether there be any truth in those things which many obtrude for most certain. Having then with some diligence considered the matter, I soon found, first that those things are false and frivolous, which are commonly opposed to us; and then that our adversaries themselves are manifestly guilty of that crime, wherewith they asperse us, and can by no arts be purged from it. For both that celebrated infallibility of the Church and of her governors, upon which the whole system of Popish faith relies, is easily proved to be null and feigned, and that even if it were true, it could yet produce no assurance of faith, no certainty of belief. To evidence and evince all this I thought not unfit; and therefore have undertaken to demonstrate these three things.

I. That it is most false what is pretended with so much confidence, that the Church, at least in the sense by them understood, cannot err.

II. That granting the Church cannot err, this her infallibility is of that nature, that both itself labours with inextricable difficulties, and can confer certainty upon nothing else.

III. That our faith relieth upon far more firm foundations ; and that nothing is believed by us, which is not both certain in itself, and such as the certainty of it cannot be unknown by us.

Of these three propositions, which may in time, God willing, be demonstrated, I have now undertaken the second, because that may be comprehended in a much shorter discourse than the rest. I will shew therefore in this treatise, that the least assurance of those things which are believed, is wanting to the Popish religion ; and that all things are there doubtful, all things uncertain, and nothing firm. This, although it be most true in the *Agenda* also of their religion ; yet to avoid prolixity, I confined myself to the *Credenda* only, and even in these omitted many things, which might perhaps seem not inconsiderable to many. For not one or two ways only doth the Roman religion overthrow the firmness of faith : it doth it upon many accounts, principally by their doctrine of the eucharist, which introduces an universal scepticism into the whole system of Christian religion : not to say, that their divines in teaching that the very existence of God is not so much known as believed, manifestly betray to Atheists the cause of religion. But I omit these things, as not properly belonging to the matter by us undertaken. What I offer in this discourse may perhaps seem to some too much embarrassed with scholastic terms and disputes : nor indeed do I wholly deny it. But I desire those persons to consider, whether this could possibly be avoided. For only to propose our arguments, and not vindicate them by examining what is opposed to them by our adversaries, seemeth to me the least part of an accurate disputation ; which whosoever shall peruse, even with the greatest diligence and attention, cannot nor ought not to give sentence ; because they have not yet heard the other party, whose defence cannot be without injustice neglected. Those defences indeed are become nauseous in this age, and not undeservedly : but, however, they could not justly be passed by and dissembled by us. Yet in these I have endeavoured to propose them as clearly and perspicuously as I could, and accommodate them to the capacity of all persons. Whether I have gained my intent, experience must declare.

CHAP. I.

Wherein is laid down the design of this Treatise ; and some Things are premised for the better Understanding of the whole.

It is acknowledged by all, that the perfection of that faith, which the Schoolmen call *inform*, we *historical*, consists in three things, that it be plenary, pure, and firm ; that is, that it believeth all which God hath revealed ; and that without any mixture of error, or admittance of doubt. That the faith of Papists is neither plenary nor pure many have demonstrated : that it is not firm or unshaken I here undertake to prove ; and to shew, that admitting their hypothesis, a Papist cannot with a certain and firm faith be persuaded of the truth of any thing ; not only not of those articles, which Rome hath added to the divine revelation, but not even of those, which were truly revealed by God.

For since objects of faith are inevident of themselves, and deserve assent no otherwise, than as it shall appear that they have been revealed by God ; and revelation itself not a whit more evident : there is necessarily required one or more rules, whereby things revealed may be distinguished from not revealed. We have only one such rule, the holy Scriptures : the Papists many, that so what they want in goodness, they may make up in number. For to Scripture they have added Tradition, Decrees of Popes, Constitutions of Councils, and consent of pastors, not only those who have successively ruled the Church from the first foundation of it, but of those also who govern it any determinate time ; and, lastly, the belief of the whole Church.

Now that by the means of any rule our faith may become firm, two things are necessary : first, that the rule itself be true, containing nothing false or not revealed : and then secondly, that what we believe, manifestly agree with this rule. If either of these conditions fail, our faith must be uncertain. Nor is it only requisite, that a Papist be ascertained both of the truth of the rules of his faith, and the conformity of what he believe unto them : but also that he be as firmly persuaded of the truth of these things, as he is of the truth of any article of his faith. For since the faith of Papists depends wholly upon these rules, and is sustained wholly by them : how can it be, that the persuasion of the truth of those things, which

they believe merely for the sake of these rules, should be more firm, than the persuasion of the truth of the rules themselves, or of the conformity of what they believe unto those rules? It being impossible, that an effect should have more in it, than the cause can give it: a conclusion stronger than the premises, or a house firmer than the foundations. Nor do our adversaries deny this. Holden* affirms, that whatsoever certainty we can attribute to an assent of the understanding given for the sake of the authority of God revealing; the same must necessarily be derived from, and depend upon the certainty of the means, whereby the authority of God revealing is communicated to the understanding: and that it is impossible, that any one should believe those things which are said to be revealed by God with a greater degree of true and rational certainty, than that wherewith he is assured, that God did reveal them. Ægidius Estrix† layeth down and proveth these three assertions. 1. That an assent of faith cannot be more certain than the principles upon which it depends. 2. That it cannot be more firm than those previous assents from which it is deduced. 3. That that which is otherwise, is an imprudent assent. And John Martinonus‡ to the same purpose writeth, that supernatural faith cannot with a formal certainty taken from the merit of the object exceed the certainty of those truths, which are included in its object, and in which that certainty is founded.

Since therefore the persuasion which Papists have of what they believe, either is, or is thought to be, divine faith: it hence appears that it cannot be solid, unless they be assured by divine faith, or some other not inferior persuasion, that both the rules of their faith are true, and that what they believe is entirely conformable to them. This our adversaries confess:

* *Quamcunque enim certitudinem attribuere possumus assensui intellectus propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis elicito, eam necesse est provenire ac dependere a certitudine medii, quo hæc Dei revelantis auctoritas intellectui communicatur.*—Impossible est, ut majori certitudine vera et rationali credat aliquis ea quæ dicuntur a Deo revelari, quam qua cognoverit Deum ea revelasse. Holden. Anal. Fid. lib. 1. cap. 2.

† Est. Diat. de Sapientia Dei, &c. Assert. 26, 27, 28.

‡ Non potest fides supernaturalis superare formali certitudine sumpta ex merito objecti certitudinem earum veritatum, quæ includuntur in ipsius objecto, et in quibus fundatur illa certitudo. Mart. Tom. 5. disp. 20. de Fide, sec. 8.

and because some of them hold that no persuasion is of equal certainty with divine faith ; therefore it is necessary that by divine faith they be ascertained of those two things, or at least the first of them. So Ludovicus Caspensis* “ unless we can believe,” saith he, “ by divine faith, that such and such Popes are successors of Peter ; there is nothing we can believe by divine faith.” Martinonust† affirms that “ the Pope could not oblige us to believe *de fide*, that he hath the power of defining, and infallible assistance.” Maimburgh‡ hath much to the same sense, which would be here too long to insert.

If the opinion of these divines were received by all, the dispute would be the shorter. For then I need only prove, that none of our adversaries is by divine faith assured of the certainty of the foundations of his faith : since all other kind of assurance, being inferior to that of divine faith, would not suffice. But because this hypothesis, although admitted by most, is denied by some few ; and labours with insuperable difficulties, which I will not here touch, I will not have the force of my argument rely upon it. It remains therefore to be inquired, whether our adversaries can boast of any certainty in this matter distinct from, and as they think, not inferior to the certainty of divine faith. But first we must lay down somewhat concerning the kinds and degrees of certainty. Bellarmine§ makes a two-fold certainty, evident and obscure ; that of things in themselves manifest, this of things that depend upon external proofs and testimonies. To the first kind he assigneth three degrees : whereof first principles constitute the first ; conclusions evidently drawn from these, the second ; and things perceived by sense the third : that is, certainty of the intellect, of science, and of experience. To obscure certainty he giveth as many degrees. The first is of those things which are believed for divine authority : the second of those believed upon the account of human authority, but that so illustrious, that it

* Nisi fide divina credamus ejusmodi Pontifices esse successores Petri ; nihil est quod possimus fide divina credere. Lud. Casp. de Fide, disp. 2. sec. 6.

† Neque summus Pontifex posset nos obligare ad credendum de fide, id quod definit ut dictum a Deo : nisi de fide esset ipsum habere potestatem definiendi et infallibilem assistentiam. Mart. de Fide, disp. 9. sec. 6.

‡ Maimb. de la vraye parole, chap. 3.

§ De Justif. lib. 3. cap. 2.

leaveth no place for doubt ; the third of those things which are confirmed by such and so many arguments, as may exclude anxiety, but not distrust : or certainty of divine faith, which is absolute certainty, of human faith, which is moral, and certainty of opinion, which is conjectural. Thus far Bellarmine, whose distribution of the kinds of certainty might be allowed, if the raising a conjectural opinion, even to the lowest degree of it, were not too improper and irrational. But to pass by that, this rather deserveth notice, that he hath made no mention of that kind of certainty, which is so famous in the Schools, as neither wholly evident, nor wholly obscure, but mixed of both. Such have theological conclusions ; which are deduced from two propositions, the one evident, the other revealed.

It need not much be inquired, whether our adversaries have this last certainty of the firmness of the foundations of their faith. For it is either of the same kind with the certainty of faith, or of a diverse. If of the same, as some will, then to prove that our adversaries have not herein the certainty of divine faith, will disprove this. If of a diverse, as most think, then it is inferior to the other, and less firm ; and consequently not sufficient. Besides, such who think, that these theological conclusions founded upon a mixed certainty, are *de fide*, as Alphonus a Castro, and Melchior Canus, must acknowledge that their opinion, oppugned by so many and so great divines, of the same party, cannot be certain. But an uncertain opinion, though true in itself, cannot be the foundation of an undoubted certainty, such as is this of divine faith. Lastly, whether this certainty be, or be not, inferior to that of divine faith ; it can have no place here but absurdly and preposterously. For all this certainty is derived from things revealed ; and cannot therefore add any to things revealed. Theological conclusions are admitted only for the sake of those revealed propositions, from which they are deducted. Those propositions therefore cannot be admitted for the sake of these conclusions, without a manifest and absurd circle.

I do not remember, that any of our adversaries have assigned a conjectural certainty to the persuasion which they have of the truth of the rules of their faith. And surely such certainty would be too mean and inconsiderable for this place, belonging to opinion rather than faith, as Bellarmine well notes ; and not excluding distrust, which is absolutely destructive of divine faith.

A moral certainty is rarely made use of by our adversaries

in this case ; being such as takes place only in matters of fact, and not in all those neither, but only such as are perceived by the senses of other men, and those so many and so clearly, as take away all suspicion either of fraud or error. Whereas those parts of a Papist's belief, which have most need of being backed by certainty, and are subject to the greatest difficulties, are matters of right ; or at least such as fall not under the senses either of himself or others. There are some things indeed, which they would have to be manifest by this kind of certainty, such as the knowledge of a lawful Pope, or a canonical Council ; what the present Church teacheth, or to which society belong the notes of a true Church, &c. We must consider, therefore, whether in these cases this certainty be sufficient. It would suffice indeed, if the opinions of Bagotius or Huetius were admitted : of whom the first equals, the second prefers moral certainty to metaphysical, and even that which is acquired by demonstration. But few approve these excesses : many on the contrary depress this certainty too low. However, all agree, that it is inferior to that of divine faith. For which reason alone I might reject it, but shall notwithstanding be content only then to do it, when it is falsely pretended.

As for an evident certainty, our adversaries neither do, nor can glory in it. For if the foundations of faith had that ; no previous motion of the will by the divine influence, no supernatural assistance of grace would be necessary ; which yet all require ; and none but fools and stupid persons could be disbelievers. Besides, that those things which are of positive right, and depend upon the free will of God, cannot be taught by nature, but must be known only by divine revelation. But herein our adversaries consent to us, as we shall see hereafter, and presume not to boast of evidence in the objects of their belief.

There remains therefore only the certainty of divine faith, which they can pretend to. Wherefore I shall chiefly consider that ; not neglecting yet the rest, whensoever it can be imagined that they may be made use of by our adversaries ; omitting only the certainty of theological conclusions, and that for the reasons before mentioned. I shall now examine all the foundations of faith which our adversaries are wont to produce ; beginning at the holy Scriptures.

CHAP. II.

That the Faith of Papists is not founded on holy Scripture.

THAT the Scripture is most certain in itself, and most fit to ground our faith upon, is our constant belief and profession. But this cannot suffice our adversaries, unless they recede from their known principles. The Scripture may be considered and used for the establishing of our faith two ways : first, as it is in itself, and its own nature : and secondly, as it is confirmed, illustrated, and assisted by the help of tradition, and the authority of the Church. That Scripture, the first way considered, is not a fit foundation of our faith, our adversaries not only freely confess, but sharply contend ; maintaining that, laying aside tradition and the Church, we cannot be assured either that Scripture is the Word of God, or consists of such books and chapters, or that they are delivered incorrupted to us, or faithfully translated ; or that this, or that is the sense of such a place. Of these opinions and arguments their authors are agreed, their books are full : that should I recite but the names, much more the testimonies of the maintainers of them, I should become voluminous.

To this may be opposed, that this is only the opinion of the school divines and controversial writers : that there are many in the Church of Rome, who believe the authority of the Scripture independent from the judgment of the Church, and dexterously use that method of arguing against Atheists ; as Huetius in his books of Evangelical Demonstration, and the anonymous author of the Dissertation concerning the arguments, wherewith the truth of Moses's writings may be demonstrated : that such as these may have a true and firm belief of those things which Scripture plainly teacheth ; which are all that are necessary to be believed.

Whilst I congratulate to the Church of Rome these more sober proselytes, and wish that by a general concurrence therein they would refute my Dissertation : I observe, first, that there are very few among them of this opinion. Secondly, that it doth not appear, that even these few are persuaded that their arguments suffice to found a divine faith upon the Scriptures demonstrated by them. The licensers and approvers of the aforementioned Dissertation seemed to be afraid of this ; while

they manifestly distinguish a persuasion arising from those arguments, from true faith. Lastly, that it doth not appear, whether they think that they can without the authority of the Church be obliged to believe, either which are canonical books, or what is the sense of those books. So that, until they declare their mind herein, they are not by us to be disjoined from, much less opposed to the rest.

I may therefore take it for granted, that according to our adversaries, the faith of private men cannot rely upon the Scripture, destitute of the assistance of tradition; since it is what themselves most of all contend for. Now for what concerneth Scripture considered the latter way, as it is fortified by the accedaneous help of Church and tradition, I might perhaps omit the handling of it here; forasmuch as neither Church nor tradition can confer a greater degree of firmness upon Scripture; which that they have not themselves, I shall in the proceeding of this discourse more opportunely shew hereafter. However, because some few things occur, not improper for this place, I shall very briefly speak of them.

First, then, how little help there is for Scripture in tradition, appeareth hence; that it can no otherwise teach what is the true sense of Scripture, but by the unanimous consent of the Fathers: which whether it be to be had in any one text of Scripture, may be much doubted. It was a hard condition, therefore, which Pope Pius IV.* prescribed, in his Profession of Faith, to all which desired admission into the Church of Rome, and which may for ever silence all the Roman commentators: "that they will never receive nor interpret Scripture any otherwise, than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers." Now I would fain know, how this law can be observed; since I may confidently affirm, that there is no one place of Scripture explained the same way by all the Fathers. For there are many places, which none of them have touched; and none which all have interpreted. Nor will it suffice to say, that they agree who have interpreted it, and that the silence of the rest is to be taken for consent; as if they must be supposed to consent, who were ignorant of such interpretations, or dead perhaps before they were made, or as if the ancients were wont expressly to reject all interpretations different from their own; or these might not be rejected, or at least others proposed, in

* Nec eam unquam nisi juxta unanimem consensum patrum accipiam et interpretabor.

those books of the Fathers, which are lost. It is not enough therefore to have the consent of a few; unless we be assured of the concurrence of the rest. But granting that it is, it cannot be denied, that our adversaries can collect nothing certain out of any place of Scripture, if any one of the ancients have interpreted it otherwise. Hence Alphonsus a Castro* requireth, that among the necessary qualifications of a text of Scripture to be produced for the conviction of heretics, this be the chief; "that it be so plain and undoubted, that none of the sacred and approved doctors interpret it in some other sense, according to which such a proposition cannot be thereby convinced of heresy." But if this be true, how few places will there be, of whose sense we may not doubt? Certainly there are very few explained the same way by all ancient commentators. This Christopher Gillius,† professor of Conimbria, acknowledgeth, who affirms "many places to be in Scripture, whose sense can be had neither from tradition, nor from the definition of the Church; neither yet can a concurrent explanation of the Fathers be found, either because they were of different opinions, or because few explained the place." And the anonymous writer of the *Treatise of the Liberties of the Gallican Church*‡ maintains, that there are few places of Scripture, which the holy Fathers have not differently interpreted. As will also manifestly appear to any one, who shall consult those interpreters, that are wont to produce the expositions of the ancient writers.

Hence the readers may imagine, to what a strait our adversaries would be reduced, if they were tied up to their own laws, and allowed to urge no other places of Scripture against us, than what are unanimously interpreted by the Fathers. A specimen hereof may be found in Launoy, where he weigheth the texts of Scripture produced by Bellarmine for the Pope's authority; and shewing that they are diversely explained by

* Ita apertum et indubitatum, ut nullus ex sacris et probatis doctoribus illud in aliquo alio sensu interpretetur, juxta quem non possit talis propositio per illud de hæresi convinci. *Castr. de Justa hæret. pun. lib. 1. cap. 4.*

† Multa sunt in sacris literis, quorum sententia neque ex Traditione, neque ex Ecclesiæ definitione habetur.—neque semper communis (Sanctorum) sententia reperitur; vel quia diversa sentiunt, vel quia pauci locum aliquem interpretati sunt. *Gill. de Doctr. sacra, lib. 1. Tract. 7. cap. 6.*

‡ Pauca sunt (Scripturæ loca) que S.S. Patres varii varie interpretati non fuerint. *lib. 3. cap. 11.*

the ancients, concludeth thence, that they are wholly ineffectual.

That the sense of Scripture cannot be learned from tradition, hence appeareth : but neither is it taught any better by the Church. At least she hath not yet taught it. For how many decrees of the Church are there about the true sense of Scriptures ? Decrees, I say : for not every simple explication or allegation of a text is to be looked upon as an authentic interpretation of it ; but only that which hath an anathema affixed to the deniers of it, or dissenters from it. Of this kind I find but four or five in the decrees of the Council of Trent, and in those of elder Councils none at all. For 1500 years the Church delivered not the sense of so much as one place : whence may be judged, both what a faithful interpreter she is of the holy Scriptures, and how small assistance we are to expect from her in obtaining the true sense of them.

CHAP. III.

That Tradition is no better ground for the Papists' Faith, than Holy Scriptures.

THUS have we taken from our adversaries the first and chief foundation of divine faith. The second will be as easily removed. I mean tradition, which may be considered two ways, as well as Scripture ; either as it is in itself, or as it is confirmed by the authority of the Church. That it hath no force the first way considered, Bellarmine* expressly acknowledgeth, affirming that "till we certainly know what is the true Church, Scripture tradition, and all matters of belief are utterly uncertain." That Bellarmine is in the right herein, at least as to what concerns tradition, is manifest by these two reasons.

First, that taking away the attestation of the Church, it cannot be known, that there are any divine traditions. For laying aside that, how shall we know that there is any un-

* Scriptura, Traditiones, et omnia plane dogmata, nisi certissimi simus, quæ sit vera Ecclesia, incerta prorsus erunt omnia. Bell. de Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 10. [p. 80. vol. 2. Prag. 1721.]

written word of God derived down to us? From tradition? that cannot be, since we are now doubting, whether there be any tradition. From Scripture? That favours not tradition: but if it did, it would avail nothing; since as we shew in the foregoing chapter, Scripture according to our adversaries cannot obtain belief, till it be itself confirmed by tradition and the Church. Thus doth the truth of tradition remain uncertain, unless it be sustained by the Church's authority. Gregory de Valentia* well knew this, who puts tradition into the same condition with Scripture; "neither being of authority when called in doubt, unless confirmed by some other certain authority."

Secondly, granting that it may be known, that there are divine traditions, it cannot yet without the authority of the Church be known, which they are: so many false, dubious and suspected traditions being carried about; each of which pretends to the same character of divine authority. The testimonies of the Fathers will not help in this case; since even their judgment is dubious, and in many things it cannot easily be told, what was their opinion. Thus Valentia† confesseth, that "tradition being conserved in the writings of the orthodox doctors, is as dubious and uncertain, as the opinion of those doctors is; and that the doubts raised concerning it cannot be defined by tradition itself." In like manner George Rhodius‡ affirms, that "no tradition can be known to be true, unless some living rule shall so define it." But that this matter, being of no small moment, may be the more manifest; we may observe that our adversaries require two things to make the testimony of the Fathers worthy to be relied on. First, that they consent; and secondly, that they do not merely propose what seems most true to themselves, but testify moreover that what they teach, was either delivered by Christ, or is of faith, or, which is all one, the opposite of it, heresy. If either of these fail, then their testimony is not secure. The first condition is required by many, and particularly by Al-

* Sicut de autoritate ipsius Scripturæ necesse per aliquam aliam certam auctoritatem constare; ita etiam de auctoritate Traditionis, si ea quoque revocetur in dubium. Val. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. I. punct. 7. sect. 12.

† Cum Traditio scriptis fere Doctorum Orthod. in Ecclesia conservetur; quæstiones ac dubia moveri possunt de sensu illius, sicut dubitatur sæpe de sensu ac mente Doctorum. Ejusmodi autem quæstiones—per eandem ipsam Traditionem definiri satis non poterunt. Val. loc. cit.

‡ Neque scire potero Traditionem aliquam esse veram; nisi vivens regula id definierit. Rhod. de Fide, quæst. 2. sect. 5. §. 1.

phonsus a Castro,* who inquiring out the ways, whereby a proposition may be convinced to be heretical; in the fourth place assigns “the unanimous consent of all the Fathers, who have written upon that argument.” The latter condition is made necessary by many more. Driedo† tells us the authority of the Fathers is of no value, “any otherwise than as they demonstrate their opinion either from the canonical Scriptures, or the belief of the universal Church since the Apostles’ times; and that they do not always deliver their sense as matters of faith; but by way of judgment, opinion, and probable reason.” Stapleton‡ writeth that this authority is not allowed to all the sayings of the Fathers, but either as they relate the public belief of the Church, or have been approved and received by the Church. Gillius§ lastly grants, that “the testimony of Fathers and doctors unanimously asserting somewhat pertaining to faith and divinity, if they simply assert it, and do withal tell us it is an article of faith, ought to be a firm argument to a divine, but without infallibility of faith.”

Both conditions are required by Canus|| and Bannes,¶ who laying down rules, whereby true traditions may be discerned from false; both assign this in the second place, and in the same words: “If the Fathers have unanimously from the beginning, all along the succession of their times, held any article of faith, and refuted the contrary as heretical.” Bellarmine and Gretser** give this for their fourth rule: “When all the doctors of the Church teach any thing by common consent to have descended from apostolical tradition, either gathered together in a Council, or each one apart in their writings.” Suarez writeth, that “although the Fathers and Schoolmen

* Quarta est omnium SS. Doctorum, qui de re illa scripserunt, concors sententia. Castr. de justa hæret. pun. lib. 1. cap. 4. [Antverp. 1568.]

† Non quia Hieronymus sic vel sic docet, non quia Augustinus, &c. Dried. de Eccles. Dogm. lib. 4. cap. 1. 6. [Lovan. 1550.]

‡ Non enim omnibus eorum dictis hæc autoritas datur; sed quatenus vel Ecclesiæ publicam fidem referunt, vel ab Ecclesia Dei recepta et approbata sunt. Stapl. de Princip. doctr. lib. 7. cap. 15. [Antv. 1596.]

§ Testimonium Patrum vel Doctorum Scholasticorum communiter asserentium aliquid ad fidem vel Theologiam pertinens, simpliciter tamen, et non indicando esse dogma fidei, esse debet argumentum firmum Theologo, sed citra infallibilitatem fidei. Gill. de Doctr. Sacra, lib. 1. Tract. 7. cap. 13.

|| Can. Loc. Theol. lib. 3. cap. 4. [Lovan. 1569.]

¶ Bann. in 2. quæst. 1. Art. 10. Si quod dogma fidei Patres ab initio secundum suorum temporum successiones concordissime tenuerunt, hujusque contrarium ut hæreticum refutarunt.

** Bell. et Grets. de Verbo Dei, lib. 4. cap. 9. [Defensio Ingolstad. 1607.]

agree in any opinion not asserting it to be of faith, but delivering their judgment in it, they will not make it to be of faith, because they remain always within the limits of human authority.”* Filliutius,† reckoning up the seven degrees of things pertaining to Catholic verity, assigns the sixth degree to “those truths, which by the unanimous consent of the Fathers are proposed to be of faith.” Martinonus,‡ that “none of the holy Fathers or doctors taken separately is the rule of faith; nor all yet together conjunctly, unless they assert their common opinion to be of faith, and not merely propose their own judgment.” Lastly, Natalis Alexander§ affirms, that “when all the Fathers conspire in the same opinion, defend it, and propose it as apostolic doctrine, and an article of the Church to be believed by Catholic faith: then doth their authority afford a necessary argument of sacred doctrine.”

Thus far these writers: and that the rest do not disagree from them we shall soon be persuaded, if we consider, how unlikely it is, that a greater infallibility should be allowed even to an unanimous testimony of the Fathers, than to the Pope, or Council, or both together, or the present universal Church: all which our adversaries grant may err in those things which they simply affirm or teach, and define not to be of faith.

It sufficeth not therefore, either that many Fathers deliver an opinion as of faith; or that all should simply teach it, but not affirm it to be of faith. Now if these two conditions be observed; how few articles of Christian faith shall we receive from tradition? For the Fathers seldom all agree, and more rarely admonish us, that what they teach, is of faith. So that if you

* *Licet Patres vel Scholastici in aliqua sententia convenient, non asserendo illam esse de fide, sed judicium suum in ea proferendo, non facient rem de fide; quia semper manent intra mensuram autoritatis humanæ.* Suarez de Fide, disp. 2. sec. 6. [Mogunt. 1619.]

† — *Quæ unanimi consensu Patrum tanquam de fide proponuntur.* Fill. in Decal. Tract. 22. cap. 1.

‡ *Certum est nullum ex SS. Patribus vel Doctoribus seorsim sumptum esse Regulam Fidei,—jam de eorundem simul sumptorum consensu distinguendum. Vel enim loquuntur ex proprio sensu, non asserendo rem tanquam de fide, et judicium suum de ea proferendo; et sic non Regula Fidei.* Mart. de Fide, disp. 8. sec. 3.

§ *Cum omnes Patres in eandem sententiam conspirant, eamque propugnant, ac proponunt, ut Apostolicam doctrinam, et Ecclesiæ dogma Catholica fide credendum: tunc eorum autoritas necessarium argumentum sacræ doctrinæ subministrat.* Alex. sæcul. 2. p. 1022.

take away all articles, wherein either of these conditions is wanting, it may well be doubted, whether any one will remain. Certainly if our controversial divines should so far make use of this observation, as to reject all testimonies of the Fathers produced by our adversaries against us, with which themselves will not be obliged, that is, such as are deficient in either of the conditions before laid down : they would be reduced to silence, and not have one authority left to boast of.

From what hath been said, it appears that matters of tradition and belief cannot be learned from the Fathers. Hence Ægidius Estrix* vehemently inveighs against Peter Van Buscum a divine of Gaunt, who in his Instruction had remitted young divines to the Fathers to learn the Christian doctrine from them. And Nuetus the Jesuit† likens those writers of controversy, who passing by the Scripture, betake themselves to the Fathers, to thieves and rogues, who, deserting the cities, flee into thick woods, that they may more securely hide themselves.

If the Fathers therefore teach not tradition, there remains only the Church, whence it can be known. Whether the Church therefore hath that power, as to confer the desired certainty upon what she pronounceth to be revealed and to be believed, is next to be inquired. Which, because our adversaries here chiefly fasten their hold, easily giving up their former means of conveying tradition, shall be somewhat more accurately discussed.

CHAP. IV.

That the Faith of Papists cannot be founded even upon the definite judgment of the Church.

First, Because it is neither evident, nor of faith, that the judgment of the Church is certain.

By the name of Church, whereon our adversaries would have the faith of all men to be founded, they are wont to design two things. First, that visible congregation of men, which consists of Pope, Clergy, and Laics ; all professing the same faith. Secondly, that part of this first Church, whose office it is to rule the rest, and prescribe laws of acting and believing to

* Est. Apol. sect. 4.

† Nuet. adv. Claud. de Eucharist. in præfat.

them: whether this part be the Pope, or a Council. The former they call the universal, the latter the representative or the regent Church. To both they ascribe infallibility, but in a different way; to the first in believing, to the second in defining, or as they choose to speak, in proposing. So that whatsoever the universal Church believeth, or the representative proposeth to be believed, must necessarily be true, and revealed by God; and the denial of it, heresy. We shall examine each in order: but first of the representative Church.

Our adversaries believe to have been instituted by God a living and visible authority, whose office it should be to define matters of belief and practice, infallibly determine emergent controversies, and judge of heresy. That whatsoever this power, which some call the Chair, others more accurately the Tribunal, defineth, proposeth, or judgeth, may and ought to be received of all Christians as an article of faith: and that this is the ordinary and immediate foundation of the faith of private Christians. Indeed in assigning this tribunal, what and where it is, all do not agree. But that there is such an one, whatsoever it is, all do contend. Whether there be such an one, is a great question, and may justly take up another discourse. But now we only consider, whether the judgment and definition of this tribunal be such, as that whosoever relieth upon it, can or ought to be certain that he doth not err, and that what he believes is true. For it is not enough that this tribunal be infallible, unless its infallibility be also manifest. Since if it had such a privilege, but either unknown or uncertain; he indeed, that acquiesced in its definitions, would not err, but could never be certain, that he doth not err, and might reasonably doubt, whether he doth or no. I inquire, therefore, whether our adversaries can be certain that the Church in defining cannot err.

If the Papists have any certainty of the infallibility of the Church defining; it must be either moral, or evident, or that of divine faith: for the rest we have excluded before. But it can be none of these. Not moral, for that depends upon the testimony of another's sense: but the infallibility of the Church cannot be perceived either by our own, or by another's sense. Nor indeed is it here pretended to by our adversaries: no more than evident certainty, which they expressly acknowledge they have not herein. So Andrew du Val* tells us, "the infallibility

* Non potest firmiter et infallibiliter sciri nisi ex Divina Revelatione, Du Val in 2. 2. pag. 16.

of the Church can be certainly known only by divine revelation." Arriaga,* that "it is not a truth known by itself, or self-evident." Conink,† that "it is known to us only by faith from the testimony of the Scriptures, and serveth to direct only the faithful." Ysambertus,‡ that "it cannot be known infallibly by men, otherwise than by divine revelation." Rhodius,§ that "it is known only by divine faith." Lastly, Antonius Arnaldus,|| that "it is not self evident."

The whole matter therefore comes to this, whether the infallibility of the Church be of faith. That it is, our adversaries, as we see, pretend; that it is not, I prove many ways. First, this seems to be the opinion of a man of great name among them, Launoy, who every where oppugneth the infallibility of the Pope, and sheweth that the infallibility of a Council appears to him not to be of faith; while he saith¶ that "although it be certain the privilege of not erring is in a Council; yet that it is far more certain among divines that it is in the Church:" which he would never have said, if he had believed the infallibility of a Council to be of faith. For then it would be no less certain than the infallibility of the Church.

Besides, it is the common opinion of our adversaries, that nothing is of faith, of which disputes are raised in the bosom of the Church, she being conscious of them. Thus Holden** affirms, "that it is not an article of divine Catholic faith, whose opposite is publicly maintained by many pious and learned Catholics, the universal Church knowing of it, and winking at it." To the same purpose Canus†† teacheth, that "if the opinion of

* Non est veritas per se nota, Arr. de Fide, Disp. 3. sect. 1.

† Sola Fide ex Scripturæ testimonio constat; solos fideles dirigit. Con. de Act. Cupern. Disp. 9. dub. 5.

‡ Non potest sciri ab hominibus infallibiliter, nisi ex divina revelatione. Ysamb. de Fide, Disp. 26. Art. 2.

§ Cognoscitur tantum Fide divinâ. Rhod. de Fide, quæst. 1. sect. 4. §. 4.

|| Non est quid ex se evidens. Arn. Perpet. de la Foy, liv. 1. chap. 7.

¶ Quamvis certum sit non errandi privilegium inesse Concilio; longe tamen certius est apud Theologos Ecclesiæ inesse. Laun. Epist. ad Vallant. tom. 2.

** Certum est illud non esse Fidei divinæ et Catholicæ dogma, cujus oppositum a plurimis piissimis et doctissimis Catholicis viris publice sustentari vidimus, sciente nimirum et tacente Ecclesia universa. Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 1. cap. 9.

†† Si unius aut paucorum opinatio non fuerit ab Ecclesia rejecta, tum plurimorum autoritas—nihil certum firmumque conficiet. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 7. cap. 3.

one or a few be not rejected by the Church, then the (contrary) authority of many will produce nothing firm or certain." There is extant among the works of the *Fratres Valemburgii*, a treatise called the Rule of Faith, written formerly in French by Veron, and translated into Latin by the *Valemburgii*, and so openly adopted by them, that whatsoever Veron writ of himself in the singular, they translate in the plural. So that whatsoever is contained in it, may be looked upon as the sense of all three writers. Now the chief scope of this book is to shew, that not a few opinions taught by many of their doctors, and by us affixed to the whole Church of Rome, are not of faith, but may be safely denied. To the obtaining of this end they make use chiefly of two means, the silence of the Council of Trent, and the testimonies of doctors of a contrary opinion: and section 15,* have these words, "that the different judgment of the doctors herein may alone suffice to prove, that it is not of faith." Upon this foundation, proceed all those divines, who maintain that the Pope is infallible, or superior to a Council. Thus the *Valemburgii* write, that "for this cause only, they will not affirm this proposition to be of Catholic faith, because authors of the contrary opinion are not condemned by the Church for heretics." So Bannes,† Bellarmine,§ Vasquez,|| and Duval¶ tell us, that "they will not assert the contrary opinion to be heresy; because it is not yet condemned by Popes or Councils, and is tolerated in the Church." But Gillius** goes farther, and reprehendeth Bannes for inflicting even a mark of rashness upon the opinion of one only sense of Scripture, since four divines, Alensis, Albertus, Henricus, and Medina had defended it.

This opinion of our adversaries is grounded on a double foundation. The first Gillius declareth in express words, viz. that "it is not credible that so many learned and pious persons

* *Variæ sunt hac de re Doctorum sententiæ; quod vel solum sufficit probando id non esse de fide Catholica.*

† *Ea solum de causa non affirmamus hanc propositionem fide Catholica esse tenendam; quod authores, qui contrarium sentiunt, nondum videamus ab Ecclesia damnatos pro hæreticis. Val. tom. 1. Tract 1. Exam. 3. num. 111.*

‡ *Ban. in 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 10. dub. 2.*

§ *Bell. de Pont. lib. 4. cap. 2. [p. 446. vol. 1. Prag. 1721.]*

|| *Vasq. in 3. disp. 137. cap. 1. [Ingolstad. 1610.]*

¶ *Duval. in 2. 2. p. 344.*

** *Quare rigida videtur censura, qua Bannes oppositam notat (sententiam) vocans eam temerariam. Gill. de Doctr. Sacra, lib. 1. Tract. 6. cap. 4.*

should either not know what the Catholic faith teacheth, or knowing it should oppose it." The second is, that it would be a most unpardonable neglect of the Church to see the faith torn in pieces by her children, and be silent in so urgent an occasion. For by that connivance she should at least indirectly confirm heresy; it being a rule of the Canon Law,* that an error which is not resisted, is approved.

If therefore I demonstrate, that not one or two, but many of the Roman divines, and those the most celebrated, and by their merit preferred to the greatest dignities in the Church, were not only ignorant of, but also openly denied this infallibility; I shall at the same time prove, that it is not of faith. The former will easily be performed. For first, the most noble and learned Jo. Fr. Picus,† Prince of Mirandula, confesseth, that "their doctors and canonists are divided in their opinions, whether a Pope and Council conjunctly defining matters of faith, can err or not; and that we are not obliged to believe either opinion." That Picus's testimony is true, any one will be convinced, that considereth how many things repugnant to this infallibility the greatest men of the Roman Church have taught. These may be reduced to four heads. First, the testimonies of those which teach that the Pope and Council (to whom alone this infallibility is assigned) can err. Secondly, of those which deny that Church which is unerring, and indefectible, to be so tied to the clergy, that it may not wholly consist in others. Thirdly, of those who assert that the faith of all men, one only excepted, may fail; and so the Church subsist in a single laic or woman. Fourthly, of those who imagine that the faith may perish in all adult persons, and so the Church consist only in baptized infants.

For the first we shall produce Ockam, or at least them, whose opinions he relates. (For in his Dialogues he never speaks in his own person.) He therefore affirms,‡ that "it is rash to say a General Council cannot err against the faith, that being the peculiar privilege of the Church militant."

* Error, cui non resistitur, approbatur, Dist. 83.

† Voluerunt multi Concilium, si una cum Pontifice in iis quæ ad essentiam fidei pertinent, sententiam ferat, nullo pacto errare posse. Restitere alii, affirmantes errare posse Concilia, et jam errasse—nec adhuc aliquid (quod sciam) promulgatum est, cujus vi ad alterutrum credendum obstringamur. Picus ad Theor. 4. [Basil. 1601.]

‡ Una sola est Ecclesia militans, quæ contra fidem errare non potest.—Temerarium est dicere, quod Concilium Generale contra fidem e rare non potest.—Occam. Dial. part 1. lib. 5. cap. 25. [Lugd. 1495.]

That “the Scriptures,* the universal Church, and the Apostles, are without hesitation to be believed, but none others how eminent soever in holiness and learning, no, not a General Council, although the universal Church were gathered together in it, nor the decrees of Popes, nor the judgments of doctors.” Lastly, that “it belongs to every man skilful in the Scriptures, with a firm assurance to judge whether Councils have been celebrated canonically, or defined catholically.”†

Peter de Alliaco,‡ cardinal of Cambray, and one of the Presidents of the Council of Constance, layeth down these three assertions. 1. “That a General Council can depart from the law of Christ.” 2. “That the Church of Rome, which is distinguished from the whole congegation of the faithful, as the part from the whole, may fall into heresy.” 3. “That the whole multitude of clergy and laity may apostatize from the true faith.” This lecture opposed by a Parisian doctor he afterwards largely defended in his reply, which he entitled *de Resumptâ*: where, among other things to this purpose, he inquireth, what is to be done, when a General Council errs, and the state of Christendom is so depraved, that heretics have all the power, the faithful being become few and contemptible: and in this case adviseth to make divers appeals, commit themselves to the Divine grace, and bear the injury with patience.

Waldensis§ teacheth, that “the Church, which is the in-

* Scripturæ divinæ, universali Ecclesiæ, et Apostolis absque ulla dubitatione in omnibus credendum. Nullis vero aliis, quantacunque doctrina vel Sanctitate præpolleant.—Ita quod nec in Concilio generali, si esset congregata universalis Ecclesia, nec Decretis Pontificum, nec Doctorum dictis est necessario credulitas in omni dicto absque omni exceptione præstanda. Id. part 3. tract. 1. lib. 3. cap. 4. [Lugd. 1495.]

† Si quæretur, quis habet judicare, an Concilia fuerint Catholice celebrata, respondetur quod periti in Scripturis habent judicare per modum firmæ assertionis, quod definita ab iis sunt Catholice definita. Id. cap. 19.

‡ 1. Concilium generale potest difformari legi Christi. 2. Ecclesia Romana, quæ distinguitur a tota congregatione fidelium, ut pars a toto, potest hæreticari. 3. Tota multitudo Clericorum et Laicorum virorum, potest a fide deficere. All. in quæst. vesper. art. 3.

§ Non est ergo specialis Ecclesia, non Africana, nec utique particularis illa Romana, sed universalis Ecclesia, non quidem in generali Synodo congregata, quam aliquotiens errasse percepimus. Sed est, &c. Vald. doctr. Fid. tom. 1. lib. 2. cap. 19. [Venet. 1571.] Paulo post. Quia nulla harum (Synodi Episcopalis, &c.) est Ecclesia Catholica Symbolica, nec vendicat sibi fidem dari sub pœna perfidiæ. Sed, &c.—Nec movere quenquam debet, quod talem concordem professionem Patrum præposui decreto generalis Concilii, etiamsi e toto orbe existentes convenirent Episcopi. Et cap. 27. Nec tamen alicui jam dictæ (Ecclesiis Apostolicis, maxime vero Romanæ,

fallible rule of faith, is neither Pope nor Council, which have sometimes erred; but the series and collection of all Doctors successively from the Apostles to our times. That neither an episcopal Synod, nor the common decree of the Roman Church, nor yet a General Council of all the bishops of the world, is that Catholic Symbolical Church, that can challenge assent upon pain of infidelity: but the universal succession of the holy Fathers throughout all ages. That an unanimous consent of the Fathers is to be preferred before the decree of a General Council, although all the bishops of the world be therein. That obedience is not so readily and entirely to be given to the dictates of any particular Church, or even to the authority of a General Council, as to the first faith proposed by Scripture, or the Symbolical Church of Christ: the other being to be regarded only as the institution of the elders, and paternal admonition."

Cardinal Panormitan* writeth, that "in things indeed concerning faith, a Council is above the Pope. Yet if the Pope be moved with better reasons and authorities than the Council, we are to stand to his determination. For even a Council may err, and hath erred. That in matters of faith the judgment even of one private man is to be preferred before the sentence of the Pope; if he were moved with better arguments drawn from the Old and New Testament than the Pope." And much more to the same purpose. Antony,† archbishop of Florence, hath transcribed this whole passage of Panormitan into his Sum of Divinity, without making the least mention of him, and delivers it as his own opinion.

Cardinal Cusanus‡ alloweth indeed Œcumenical Councils to be infallible: but to this end requireth so many conditions,

et authoritati Concilii Generalis) ita obediendum censeo, et tam prona fide, sicut primæ fidei Scripturæ, vel Ecclesiæ Christi symbolicæ, sed sicut institutionibus seniorum et monitioni paternæ.

* Ideo in concernentibus fidem concilium est supra Papam—Puto tamen quod si Papa moveretur melioribus rationibus et autoritatibus quam Concilium, quod standum esset sententiæ suæ. Nam et Concilium potest errare, sicut alias erravit, &c.—Nam in concernentibus fidem etiam dictum unius privati esset præferendum dicto Papæ, si ille moveretur melioribus rationibus N. et V. Testamenti quam Papa. Panorm. in Cap. Significati de electione.

† Ant. Summ. Theol. part. 3. tit. 23. cap. 2. §. 6.

‡ Notandum est experimento rerum Concilium universale plenarium posse deficere; quomodo etiam varia Concilia talia fuerunt, quæ iudicando errarunt. Cusan. Concord. Cath. lib. 2. cap. 3. et 4. [Basil. 1565.]

that it is very difficult they should all be had, and impossible to be known when had. The fourth condition is, "that the Council regulate itself by the rules of the Holy Ghost laid down in Scripture, and the definitions of precedent Councils. Otherwise that, howsoever free and universal, they may be appealed from, and protested against." And at last concludes, that "it is to be seen by experience, that a full General Council can err; as divers such Councils have been, which have erred in defining." Thus he of Councils; who hath much more about the errability of the Pope. Wherefore Bellarmine reckons him among the Parisians. Nicholas de Clemangis* expressly disputes against the infallibility of Councils. But because he preadmonisheth that he affirms nothing, but only to dispute for finding out the truth; I shall not urge his testimony.

Cardinal Dominicus Jacobatius† asserteth, that "when Popes and Councils disagree in defining, that judgment is to be preferred, which is consonant to the definition of precedent Councils. If none of which have passed sentence in this matter, then the Council's definition shall not be received, if the Pope's be founded upon better reasons and authorities. For that a Council can err; as appears by that of Ariminum, the second of Ephesus, that of Afric under Cyprian, and many others. That the infallibility of the universal Church proves not the same to be in a Council: since the universal Church is not truly in a Council." That in the case of contrary definitions by the Pope and a Council, "it is not yet defined, what is to be done or observed." That "his opinion however is, that he which should hold to and observe either part, should not therefore incur the danger of damnation, although he died in the observation of it."

All these manifestly teach that both a Pope and Council, to whom alone active infallibility is attributed, may err. Nor is it enough to say, that herein they deliver their judgments of the Pope and Council, disagreeing one from another, and not conjunctly defining. This indeed may seem to be said with some

* Clem. in Disp. de Conciliis. [Lugd. Batav. 1612.]

† Quia Concilium potest errare, ut patet in Concilio Ariminensi Ephesino. 2. Africana Synodo tempore Cypriani, et in aliis multis. Nec obstat si dicatur, quod Ecclesia non potest errare; quia intelligitur de Ecclesia universali. Sed Concilium representativa dicitur Ecclesia; in Concilio enim vere non est universalis Ecclesia. Jacob. de Concil. lib. 6. p. 239.

colour of truth in Jacobatius : but as for Ockam and Alliacensis it doth by no means fit them. Nor yet doth it in the least enervate the testimonies of the rest : since whensoever they deny infallibility to Pope or Council, they do not thereto oppose the consent of both, but either the symbolical and successive Church, as Waldensis ; or the universal, as all the rest. Besides, they deny infallibility to belong to the representative Church, and to be the property of the universal, whereas every one knoweth and acknowledgeth that only the representative Church is in a Council. As for Jacobatius's opinion, it plainly is, that obedience is then immediately to be given to the decree of a Pope or Council, when it is consonant to the definition of some former, even particular Council, which had been received by the universal Church ; that this obedience thereof is to be paid, not for the authority of the present definition, but the approbation of the universal Church, which she is supposed to have given to it by a long reception. But what clears the matter beyond all exception, is, that Jacobatius is one of those, who think the Church may fail, except one woman only ; as we shall see afterwards under the third head.

The second classis contains the testimonies of doctors asserting the Church, for which Christ prayed, and promised the gates of hell should not prevail against it, not to be confined to the ecclesiastic order, but may consist of believers of whatsoever rank and order. This Petrus Alliacensis expressly affirms in the place by us above cited. So the author of the Gloss* upon the Canon Law, inquiring what Church it is that cannot err, determineth "it to be the congregation of the faithful ; which cannot fail, Christ having prayed for it : " and Nicolas Lyra† to those words, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," affixeth this gloss—"that is, to subvert it

* Quæro de qua Ecclesia intelligas quod hic dicitur, quod non possit errare ? de ipso Papa, qui Ecclesia dicitur ? sed certum est, quod Papa errare potest. Respondeo, ipsa congregatio fidelium hic dicitur Ecclesia. Et talis Ecclesia non potest non esse. Nam ipse Dominus orat pro Ecclesia. Caus. 24. quæst. 1.

† A vera sc. fide subvertendo. Ex quo patet, quod Ecclesia non consistit in hominibus ratione potestatis vel dignitatis Ecclesiasticæ vel sæcularis ; quia multi principes et summi Pontifices, &c. inventi sunt apostatasse a fide. Propter quod Ecclesia consistit in illis personis, in quibus est notitia vera, et confessio fidei et veritatis. Lyra in Matth. 16. 18. [Paris. 1590.]

from the true faith." To which he subjoins, "whence, it is manifest that the Church consists not in men in respect either of ecclesiastical or secular dignity (for they have sometimes apostatized from the faith), but in those persons in whom remains a true knowledge and confession of the faith and truth."

The third classis comprehendeth the testimonies of those who teach, that the whole Church may fail, except one only person, and that either ecclesiastic or laic, man or woman, and so the Church consist in that person alone. That the Church actually did so at the time of our Saviour's passion, Tostatus (doth not assert,* as Suarez† and Bannes‡ falsely relate, but) tells us it was the common opinion in his time. The same writes Æneas Sylvius in his history of the Council of Basil. Bannes and Turrecremata§ attribute this opinion to Alexander Alensis, Hugutius, and Durandus Mimatensis: the latter ascribes it also to the whole multitude of preachers: and produceth out of Alensis this sentence:|| "that opinion, which saith the Church, consisted in the Virgin alone, in whom alone remained true faith at the passion, seems true to us:" which Turrecremata also defends in many places, particularly Summ. de Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 30. lib. 3. cap. 61. Besides these four, there are not a few of the same mind. Ockam affirms,¶ that "the whole faith of the Church may remain in one single person, as it did in the blessed Virgin at the time of our Lord's passion; that if God permitted this in the days of the Apostles, he will much sooner permit it in these latter ages; and that the contrary opinion is rash." Panormitan, in the words immediately following those before cited,** saith, "it is possible the faith of Christ may remain in one only person." That "at the passion of our Saviour it remained only in the blessed Virgin; and that for this cause probably the Gloss saith,

* Tost. in Matth. præf. quæst. 14. [Venet. 1596.]

† Suar. de Fide, disp. 9. sect. 3. [Mogunt. 1604.]

‡ Bann. in 2. 2. q. 1. art. 10. dub.

§ Turrec. de Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 6.

|| *Opinio quæ dicit, quod in sola Virgine stetit Ecclesia, in qua sola fides mansit in passione, videtur nobis vera.*

¶ *In uno solo potest stare tota fides Ecclesiæ; quemadmodum tempore mortis Christi tota fides Ecclesiæ in B. Virgine remanebat. Non est etiam credendum, &c. Occ. Dial. part. 1. lib. 2. cap. 25.*

** *Possibile est, quod vera fides Christi remaneret in uno solo—Hoc patuit post passionem Christi. Nam, &c. Et forte hinc dicit Glossa, quod ubi sunt boni, ibi est Ecclesia Romana. Panorm. loc. cit.*

wheresoever good men are, there is the Church of Rome." This passage, also, as well as the former, Antonius Florentinus translated into his Sum. Peter de Monte,* bishop of Brixia, gives this reason, why laics ought to be admitted into the Council; "because the faith may possibly remain in one simple laic, as it did formerly in the blessed Virgin." Clemangis asserts,† "the Church may by grace remain in one single woman, as formerly in the Virgin." Jacobatius writeth,‡ that "after the passion faith remained in the blessed Virgin alone, that so the promise of indefectibility made by Christ unto his Church might not fail; which promise was made not to the representative Church (or a Council), but to the universal." Lastly, J. Fr. Picus Mirandula saith,§ that "in the time of Christ the Apostles falling away from the faith, it remained entire and perfect in the Virgin alone."

The fourth classis exhibits only Jandovesius of Minorca, who by the relation of Bannes,|| taught about the year 1363, that in the time of Antichrist the Church should consist only of baptized infants, all adult persons apostatizing from the faith.

Thus far these testimonies, which occurred to me in a hasty search. If I had time or opportunity to turn over the writings of the 13th, 14th, and 15th ages, I doubt not but I should find many more. However, any one may see how utterly repugnant these which I have produced are to the infallibility of Pope and Council. Yet there is no sentence pronounced against these writers, no mark set upon them, not the least censure inflicted on them. How can this be, if they had taught downright heresy? Nay, this opinion is not only not condemned, but also many ways approved. First, in that the defenders of it have been preferred to the greatest dignities of the Church; some made cardinals, others presidents of

* Quia fides potest remanere etiam apud simplicem laicum, et in aliis omnibus perire, sicut accidit in persona B. Mariæ in passione Christi. Pet. de Monte, lib. de Monarchia.

† In sola potest muliercula per gratiam manere Ecclesia; sicut, &c. Clem. disp. de Concil. [Lugd. Batav. 1612.]

‡ Nam et remansit fides in B. Virgine aliis deficientibus post passionem, ut ostenderetur quod non possit deficere fides, pro qua Christus oravit, cum dixit Petro, Et ego pro te rogavi, ut non deficiat fides tua. Et non intelligitur, &c. Jac. de Concil. lib. 6. p. 242.

§ Christi tempore deficientibus in fide Apostolis, integra et omnino perfectissima fides in sola Virgine Domini matre remansit. Pic. Theor. 13.

|| Bann. Comm. fus. in 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 10. dub. 1.

Councils, one (Antonius Florentinus) sainted, and at this day worshipped. Which surely would not have been done, if he had taught heresy. But what is more express, and which cannot be eluded, is that Thomas Waldensis's work, whence he produced the clearest passages, was solemnly approved by Pope Martin V. This Trithemius,* affirms, telling us that Martin V. examined this work, and confirmed it by apostolical authority. The Bull of Approbation also may be seen prefixed before the third volume, with the examination subjoined, which lasted above a month, when the work being presented to the Pope, it was by him confirmed in full Consistory. So that after this strict examination and solemn approbation to imagine heresy is contained in this book, will draw the Pope, who approved it, and the whole Church (which never opposed this approbation) into the suspicion of heresy.

I have done with the first argument. The second shall be drawn from the silence of the Council of Trent; which alone proveth that they thought it not an article of faith; since they condemned not the Protestants on that account, although no less vigorously impugning it, than any other article of their Church. This argument is so much the stronger, in that our adversaries frequently urge the silence of the Council of Trent to prove articles, by us objected to them, not to be of faith. So Veronus, and the Valemburgian brethren in the book above mentioned. So the Bishop of Meaux in that famous book, which hath illuded so many. If they reasoned well herein, why may not we use the same arguments? and then the infallibility of the Church cannot be of faith, because wholly pretermitted by the Tridentine Council.

Lastly, that it is not of faith may be proved hence, that no foundation of such a faith can be alleged. For if any were, it must be either Scripture or tradition, or some decree of the ruling Church, or the consent of the universal Church. That Scripture and tradition cannot be produced in this case, we have already demonstrated, for this reason especially, because the certainty of both depends upon the testimony of the Church. Yet Amicus† flieth thither, who after he had ob-

* Quod Martinus Papa V. examinatum autoritate Apostolica confirmavit. Trithem in Vald. [Colon. 1531.]

† Sumi possunt traditio et Scriptura primo modo ut approbatæ infallibili judicio ipsius regulæ animatæ, quo pacto sunt autoritatis divinæ et credendæ fide infusa. Hoc autem modo a nobis non sumuntur ad pro-

jected our argument to himself, answers that, "Scripture and tradition may be taken either as approved by the infallible judgment of the living rule, and so of divine authority, and to be believed by infused faith. That thus considered they cannot be produced to prove the authority of the living rule: or they may be taken as only testified and confirmed by human reason, and so of human authority, and to be believed by acquired faith: that this way considered, they are produced to prove the living rule: wanting indeed infallible divine authority, but having such human authority, as by the accession of Christ's providence over his Church becomes infallible."

I wish the Jesuit in writing this had first objected to himself our whole argument. For that is drawn not only from the impossibility of knowing, according to our adversaries, the divinity of Scripture or tradition, without being first assured of the infallibility of the Church; but also from hence, that they teach it cannot be known which are the canonical books, whether received by us uncorrupted, or faithfully translated, and is the true sense of them, without the same previous assurance. If he had objected all this to himself, he must either have departed from all the rest of their divines, and denied their so much boasted of arguments, or have yielded herein. Yet let us examine what he offers. First, therefore, his joining the providence of Christ to the yet human authority of Scripture and tradition, is frivolous and absurd. For of that we are assured no otherwise than by faith, and consequently it cannot be a foundation to faith. Now this being taken away, the other arguments of the truth of Scripture and tradition, according to the Jesuit's argumentation become fallible, and so no fit foundation for infallible faith. Besides, I would know whether this acquired faith carrieth with it indubitable truth, and be of the same certainty with divine or infused faith, or at least sufficient to found divine faith upon. For if it be not, our argument returns: if it be, why may we not have, without the assistance of the Church's authority, a divine faith of those things, which Scripture, or if you will tradition also, clearly and plainly teach, at least as clearly, as they are thought to teach that infallibility of the Church?

bandam, infallibilem auctoritatem regulæ animatæ. Secundo modo sumi possunt, ut testatæ signis et rationibus humanis, ut quod, &c. quo pacto sunt auctoritatis humanæ et credendæ fide acquisita. Atque hoc modo sumuntur ad probandam, &c. Amic. de Fide, disp. 6. n. 52.

But Amicus hath a reserve for this.* He pretends that although the human arguments of the truth of Scripture and tradition be self-evident and sufficient to create a divine faith, yet that we are forbidden by God to believe them with a divine faith, till his vicar the Pope shall have confirmed them. A miserable refuge which lieth open to a thousand inconveniences. For to omit asking where this prohibition of God is to be found; not to urge that hereby all their arguments drawn from the nature of the thing concerning the uncertainty of any revealed article without the supervenient authority of the Church, are wholly destroyed; not to say, that hereby the controversy is turned from matter of right into matter of fact, and become a mere inquiry, whether God hath made any such prohibition: laying aside, I say, all these things, I will insist upon this one observation. It is not here inquired, whether Scripture and tradition proposed by any other than the Pope oblige us to assent or not; but only whether any one, either obliged or not obliged, can receive them howsoever proposed, and thence build his faith upon them. If he can, then our argument returns; and we may also believe with divine faith what we find taught in Scripture. If he cannot, I would fain know which way then Papists can admit Scripture and tradition, and from them learn the infallibility of the Church; since Amicus had before denied that it could be learned, or ought to be believed for the testimony of Scripture and tradition, as infallibly proposed by the Church.

It is manifest, therefore, the belief of the infallibility of the Church cannot rest on Scripture or tradition. But neither can it on the judgment of the ruling Church. For besides that no such judgment is produced, if it were, it would be fruitless. For then, what was never granted, the Church will be judge and give sentence in her own cause; which Alphonsus a Castro† denieth to Scripture, because that were to run *in infinitum*, and no testimony can be valid in its own cause. For imagine any one, that believed not the Church to be infallible now to begin to believe it: this first act of belief cannot be founded upon the judgment of the Church. For whosoever believeth anything for the sake of the Church's judgment, did

* Ibid. num. 49.

† Si de Scriptura ipsa est quæstio, non poterit ipsamet esse Judex: quia tunc erit abire in infinitum. In propria causa nullius testimonium est validum. Castr. de Justa hæret. punit. lib. 1. cap. 5. [Venet. 1546.]

before believe that judgment to be certain, which destroyeth the supposition.

This our adversaries confess. So Conink:* “The judgment, whereby we judge that we are to believe the Church hath infallible authority of proposing matters of faith, ought to be grounded upon other arguments or some other foundations.” So also Mæratius:† “None can believe this article of our faith (the infallibility of the Church), the Church’s authority itself intervening to this assent, as the rule infallibly proposing matters of belief.”

There remains therefore only the belief of the universal Church, whereon this faith of private Papists herein can rely. Many things might here be said; but because we shall handle that matter more fully at the end of this treatise, we will not anticipate our arguments here. I shall only in a word observe the absurdity of it. Our adversaries say, that private persons ought to believe the active infallibility of the ruling Church, because they see it believed by the universal Church. But why doth the universal Church believe it? truly for no other reason, but because she doth believe it. For the universal Church is nothing else but the collection of all single believers.

CHAP. V.

*That it is uncertain, what are those Decrees of the Church
whereon Faith may rely.*

WHAT I said will be more manifest to him, who shall consider; that to make the decrees of the Church a fit foundation for our faith, it is not sufficient to know that the Church in defining cannot err, unless also we know what are those definitions of the Church, which are placed beyond all danger of error. For our adversaries all acknowledge, that the Church doth not always, nor in all things enjoy this privilege of infallibility, but in many things may be mistaken, as in defining

* Judicium quo judicamus nobis credendum esse Ecclesiam habere infallibilem omnino auctoritatem proponendi res fidei, debet aliis notis, sive alio fundamento niti. Conink. de Actib. sup. disp. 17. dub. 3.

† Nemo potest credere hunc Articulum fidei nostræ, interveniente ad assensum hunc ipsa Ecclesiæ auctoritate, tanquam regula res credendas infallibiliter proponente. Mærat. de Fide, disp. 17. sect 2.

philosophical questions; and in general, whatsoever belongeth not to religion. Some add controversies of fact; others canonization of saints: many all those things, which although belonging to faith, are not yet proposed as of faith, but only simply affirmed, or brought for the illustrating and confirming of some other matter. Since the Church therefore may be mistaken in so many things, we ought to be well acquainted what those decrees are wherein she cannot err.

That this notwithstanding is most uncertain, two things evince. First, that it appears not what are the conditions, what the character and notes of a firm and valid decree. Secondly, that although this should appear, it would not yet be known what are those particular decrees which have these characters. The first again is manifest by two reasons; first, in that it is uncertain whether these exceptions wherewith the infallibility of the Church is limited, be all lawful; and then no less uncertain whether they be all which can and ought to be assigned. For if both these things be not certainly known, we shall continually doubt, whether we do not for some unjust exception undeservedly reject some decree of the Church that ought to be obeyed; and receive some other, which for some just exception not yet assigned ought to be rejected.

But both on the contrary are uncertain. The first, concerning the lawfulness of the conditions already assigned is, because our adversaries themselves do so irreconcilably differ in assigning them. Whatsoever one layeth down, some other removeth: so that nothing certain can be had thence. Nor can it be said these conditions are self-evident, or of faith. For what evidence is that which escapes the knowledge of so many learned men? And our adversaries grant, as we saw before, that nothing can be of faith, whereof catholic divines dispute unregarded by the Church. Besides, if it be of faith, it must be revealed. But where is this revelation? In Scripture? Nothing either is or can be produced thence. In tradition? That will afford perhaps two or three testimonies of the ancients, but which respect only one condition (that of excluding controversies of fact) and are themselves liable to many exceptions. But granting they are not, what shall become of the other conditions assigned, of no less moment: or what will two or three testimonies avail, wherein their authors affirm not what they write to be of faith? Nor will the regent Church give us any help therein. For she hath defined nothing in this

matter; or if she had, it would be wholly vain. For it would still be inquired, whether that definition were of faith, and so in *infinitum*. As for the universal Church, she can have no place here, as well for the reasons abovementioned, as because her dissent rather than consent is to be shewed herein.

There is no way therefore left, but to recur to experience. They will say they have observed the Church to err, when she undertook to define in cases excluded by their exceptions, and that these exceptions therefore must necessarily be applied to those places of Scripture which attribute infallibility to the Church. But then they will give us just reason to reply, that if experience giveth us a right to reject that sense of Scripture, which the words seem to imply, merely because it is repugnant to our observations, and substitute another more congruous to them: then we may most justly reject that sense of those words, "This is my body," which our adversaries affix to them, as contrary to the experience of all mankind, and assign another perfectly accommodated both to reason and experience. Besides, there is nothing against which our adversaries more sharply contend, than to judge and examine the definitions of the Church by dumb and dead rules, such as Scripture and tradition are; yet this very thing is done by those men, who thence conclude the Church to be fallible in certain cases, because they have observed her to have been formerly mistaken in them. For this can be done no otherwise than by examining the decrees of the Church either by Scripture or tradition.

Again, if experience giveth them a right to limit the infallibility of the Church by their exceptions, why may not we challenge the same privilege, and assign our exceptions likewise? We then lay down only that one, formerly proposed by Cusanus, which if admitted by our adversaries, will soon put an end to all controversies, that is, that the Church never presume to define any thing but according to the holy Scriptures, leaving undecided all things wherein they are either silent or obscure. And so all our controversies are reduced to this one point, whether this exception is to be added to those which our adversaries have assigned. As often therefore as they oppose to us the judgment of the Church, we may with reason reject it, till they can shew that our exception is unjust, which they will never be able to do. On the contrary, we can demonstrate the equity of it by experience, and shew that the Church hath erred, as often as she observed not this excep-

tion. But let it be rejected. Who can tell, whether no other is to be added? Certainly if the observation of the past errors of the Church have given occasion to these writers to form these exceptions: the observation of future errors will likewise produce new exceptions. Nay, who will warrant, that nothing already past hath escaped the notice of these observers, whence other exceptions might have been framed?

And hence also appears what I undertook to prove in the second place, that although we were assured the exceptions are lawful and justly assigned, we cannot be certain they are all that are so, and whether others are not yet to be added. For since the exceptions are formed only from experience; if the authors of them made not a just observation of all the past errors of the Church, or had not in their eye all possible future errors of a different nature, there may be other exceptions no less necessary and momentous to be assigned. And how shall we be at last ascertained of the requisite diligence, sagacity, and prudence of these observers? I shall illustrate all by a famous example. One of the chief exceptions, whereby the Papal power is limited, is that all those decrees are excluded, which were not for some space of time affixed to the doors of St. Peter's Church and the Apostolic Chancery, and solemnly promulgated by the Pope's messengers in the wonted places. This exception was made about a hundred years since merely to serve a turn, when they could by no other means elude the arguments of the Protestants against the Papal infallibility drawn from Pope Clement VIII.'s bull, whereby he recalled Sixtus V.'s edition of the Bible, and preface prefixed to it. Then it was they forged this exception, pretending that Sixtus's bull, although printed and prefixed to his Bibles, had not been solemnly published by the messengers. An exception which had never been dreamt of, had not Sixtus erred; as appeareth hence, that the precedent writers Cajetan, Canus, and Bellarmine, make no mention of it, whereas of the subsequent writers few forget it. Nor is there any doubt, but that if any Pope hereafter should commit some other mistake, which might wound his pretended infallibility; some other exception would be framed to salve his honour.

If therefore our adversaries, as we have proved, cannot certainly know what are the conditions and characters of the infallible decrees of the Church, they must necessarily be ignorant which decrees may be securely believed and obeyed. But granting they might be certain herein, and taking away all

these scruples, they will be yet for ever uncertain which decrees have, which want these conditions. For what will it avail to know that the Church may err in matters philosophical, or of fact, or which are not proposed as of faith, if we be uncertain what are philosophical matters, what of fact, and what proposed as of faith? Yet that all these kinds of things are yet uncertain, will be easily evinced. For,

First, since the school divines have so intermingled Aristotle's philosophy with divinity, nothing is more difficult than exactly to distinguish them. Whence it frequently happens, that what one accounts merely philosophical, another esteems matter of divinity. So in the year 1666, when a certain Theatine* at Paris had proposed these and such like theses to be publicly disputed of, *viz.* "that any knowledge in the Father was absolutely sufficient to beget the Son; so that if the Father had understood but any one object, suppose a lily, he must be thereby supposed to have begotten the Son; that if both together had loved but any one object, as a rose, yet would they thereby have spirated the Holy Ghost. That the unspeakable torment of devils consists in this, that by hypostatical union the devil is become fire, and fire become the devil." These and the like theses the proposer maintained to be theological. Launoy contends they are philosophical; others think, perhaps more truly, that they are foolish and profane. The Council of Constance defined the accidents in the eucharist, to remain destitute of any subject. The Cartesians deny this, and value not the definition, pretending that it is about a matter philosophical. Others thereupon accuse their denial of heresy. Copernicus and Galileo their system of the world was condemned at Rome. Some thereupon dare not embrace it, though otherwise inclined to believe it. Others more bold contend it is purely a matter of philosophy. See therefore many learned and wise men divided about the application of the first exception. And if so, how shall more ignorant persons be able rightly to distinguish them, and thence certainly to know, to which of the Church's decrees they are to give a stedfast, and to which a dubious faith?

The same is the case of the second exception. Many of our adversaries deny the Church to be infallible in questions of fact. In the mean while they differ about determining what are matters of fact, and what of right. To know what is the sense of

* Apud Launoi Epist. part. 5. Epist. 2. ad Berruer. [Lib. v. Epist. 4. p. 57. vol. v. pars 2. Colon. Allobrog. 1731.]

a late writer, many account a question of fact. Estrix,* on the contrary, contends it belongs to right.

The same may be said of the third exception. That excludes from the rank of infallible all decrees not proposed as of faith. But what those decrees are doth not appear. So the Council of Trent, for example, defined that the body of Christ exists under the bread by virtue of the words, but the blood not by virtue of the words, but by concomitance. No anathema being inflicted upon those that think otherwise, hence arose a question, whether this distinction were of faith. Some in Vasquez† hold the negative: himself largely endeavours to prove the affirmative. This might be further confirmed with innumerable instances. But I choose rather to take notice of somewhat more remarkable. The Church in defining hath in these latter ages been wont to make use of words, which might rather conceal than declare her opinion, and from which the most sagacious persons should not collect her meaning. For example, one of the notes whereby we know whether a definition be by the Church proposed as of faith, is the excommunication of the deniers of it; yet it sometimes happens the Church would not have that be thought to be of faith, the deniers whereof she excommunicates. So the Council of Trent‡ having enjoined that every one conscious of any mortal sin, should confess, before he communicates, subjoineth: “If any one presume to teach, preach, or pertinaciously assert the contrary, let him be *ipso facto* excommunicate.” Any one would hereby imagine, that the opinion of Cajetan were condemned of heresy. Yet Canus§ tells us, “that for caution sake it was not; and of this,” saith he, “we that were present in the Council are witnesses.” See another artifice, which creates more perplexities. When the Church condemneth many propositions in one decree, it oftentimes happens that they are not all of the same kind and quality; but some heretical, others only erroneous, some rash, others scandalous, and some offensive to pious ears, as they are wont to term them. Now none

* Estr. Diat. de Sapiencia, &c. assert.

† Vasq. in 3 disp. 185. cap. 2. [Ingolstad. 1610.]

‡ Si quis contrarium docere, prædicare, vel pertinaciter asserere præsumpserit, eo ipso excommunicatus existat.

§ Hoc propter periculum cautum est—Nam quod sententia Cajetani non fuerit pro hæretica condemnata et nos testes sumus, qui Concilio interfuimus. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5. [Lovan. 1569.]

but heretical propositions hurt the faith, and consequently if the Church be infallible only in matters which she proposeth as of faith, when she condemneth these mixed propositions, her judgment is infallible only in respect of the heretical ones. The rest may with safety and truth be defended. It is of infinite concern therefore in the direction of our faith, that these propositions should be distributed into their several classes, and the particular censure specified in each of them. But that is very rarely done. The propositions are all huddled up together; and we are only told in general, that some of them are heretical, others erroneous, &c.

Thus the Council of Constance* condemned forty-five propositions of Wickliff in these words:—"This holy Synod hath caused them to be examined, and it is found that many of them are notoriously heretical, others not catholic but erroneous, some scandalous and blasphemous, some offensive to pious ears, and some rash and seditious." In the same manner that Council condemned thirty assertions of John Huss, without acquainting us what particularly in them is contrary to faith, and consequently what wherein themselves cannot err. The Popes make use of the same trick. So the bull,† where-with Pius V. and Gregory XIII. condemned seventy-five propositions of Michael Baius, after it hath recited them, and confessed, "that divers of them might be in some sense maintained, condemns them all respectively as heretical, erroneous, suspected, rash, scandalous, and offensive to pious ears." See an ambiguous sentence, and very unfit to remove scruples. Nor doth Vasquez deny it, but tells us, "that from their censure doth not appear, what censure agreeth to each single proposition."‡ Wherefore when himself had undertaken to defend some of these propositions, that he might know in which of them the poison of heresy lay hid, he began to read Baius's book, having first asked leave. But when that would not do,

* Quibus examinatis fuit repertum aliquos et plures ex ipsis fuisse et esse notorie hæreticos, alios non Catholicos sed erroneos, alios scandalosos et blasphemos, quosdam piarum aurium offensivos, nonnullos eorum temerarios et seditiosos. Concil. Const. sess. 8.

† Quas quidem sententias, quamquam nonnullæ aliquo pacto sustineri possent, in rigore tamen hæreticas, erroneas, &c. respective damnamus. Bulla ad calcem Operum Vasq.

‡ Ex qua censura non apparet, qualis unicuique propositioni censura sigillatim conveniat. Vasq. in 1, 2. disp. 190. cap. 18. [vol. 2. Ingolstadt. 1512.]

he consulted Cardinal Toletus, whom the Pope had sent to Louvain, to see the bull put in execution ; and learned from him that the Popes had condemned some of those propositions, only because they were too sharply worded. Now what a rare help doth the Church afford in declaring to every one what he should believe, when the sense of her own decrees cannot be known without consulting her most intimate counsellors, such as Canus and Toletus ?

Further, it may very well be, that he which knoweth the particular propositions condemned of heresy, may be ignorant wherein the heresy consists. For the same proposition may admit of many senses, whereof some may be true, others false, some heretical, others not. If the Church had any care of the truth, she ought accurately to distinguish these senses, and tells us which may be admitted, and which ought to be exploded. But nothing of this is done. Rather Pius V. and Gregory XIII. declaring that some of Baius's propositions are in some sense maintainable, but in rigour heretical, tell us neither what is that harmless sense which may be defended, nor that pernicious heresy which ought to be avoided.

But nothing evinceth this more clearly, than what lately happened upon occasion of the Jansenist doctrine. Five propositions were taken out of Jansenius's *Augustinus*, and by some French bishops sent to be examined by the Pope. Others were present for Jansenius, who pleaded the propositions were capable of divers senses, some true, some false ; and earnestly desired it might be specified in which sense each proposition were approved or condemned. That request being stiffly denied by the Roman Consistory, who were resolved to condemn them in the gross ; the Jansenists distinguished three senses of each proposition, and placing the different senses in three columns, offered them to the examiners, desiring they would admonish which of all those senses the censure aimed at. But neither so could they obtain their end. Only afterwards when the controversy grew hot, Pope Alexander VII. declared the propositions were condemned in the sense intended by the author. The author had been now dead before his book was published, much less condemned. And so while the Popes pretended to condemn the author's sense, they said nothing else but that they condemned a sense which neither they would, nor any body else could tell, what it was. And to this day it is dis-

puted among them, what is that heretical sense intended by the author, and condemned by the Popes.

Thus much of the third exception. I might add another, which not a few of our adversaries produce. For they require that the Church proceed maturely, diligently, and canonically in her judgment: which certainly few or none can know. But because the consideration of this would take up too much time I shall omit it. Having already sufficiently evinced that nothing is more uncertain than to know what are those decrees of the Church, which may be securely believed; and consequently that faith cannot be founded on them.

CHAP. VI.

That it is uncertain, what is that part of the Universal Church, to which active Infallibility belongs.

And first, that it doth not appear whether it be in the Pope.

IF we should, after all this, grant the knowledge of the Church's infallibility, and of her infallible decrees, not to be impossible, this would contribute nothing to the establishing our faith, unless it were likewise known, what is that supreme tribunal, whose decrees are to be obeyed. "For if this were uncertain," saith Arriaga, "whatsoever is believed as of faith concerning a judge of controversies in the Church, would be ridiculous."* Now this thing is really uncertain, as I shall prove. There are three opinions concerning it among our adversaries. For this supreme and infallible power is by most assigned to the Pope alone, by almost all the French and some few more to a Council alone, and lastly to Pope and Council together by some very few, so few, that I could never find one that expressly asserted this opinion, and but two or three that obscurely insinuate it.

I begin with the Pope, and affirm, that unless his infallibility

* Si enim incertum hoc esset; quicquid de iudice controversiarum in Ecclesia ut certum de fide creditur, esset plane ridiculum. Arr. de Fide, Disp. 7. sect. 8.

be of faith, his decrees cannot be the foundation of faith. No other certainty will here suffice, for as for moral and self-evident, here is not the least shadow of them; and that of theological conclusions I before excluded. So that certainty of faith is necessary. This our adversaries confess, at least those of the first opinion. Caspensis writeth, "that unless we believe by divine faith such Popes to be the successors of Peter, there is nothing we can believe with divine faith."* Martinonus, "that the Pope could not oblige us to believe as of faith what he defineth to be revealed by God, unless it were of faith, that he hath the power of defining, and infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost."† Rhodius, "that unless the infallibility of the Pope were of faith, it would not be of faith, that he is not actually mistaken."‡

Is it therefore of faith that the Pope is infallible? So indeed some of them maintain, as Suarez, Castrus, Palaus, Lud. Abelly, Ja. Vernautius, Fr. Macedo, Theoph. Raynaudus, Amicus Caspensis, Martinonus, Rhodius, and others. Yea, Abelly affirms that "it is a fundamental truth of religion, a prime article of faith, upon which the rest depend, and the contrary opinion a capital heresy."§ Vernautius concludeth that "none without the crime of heresy can hold an opinion contrary to the belief of the Pope proposed to all the faithful."|| Macedo thinks "the denial of it to be an undoubted error in faith, and if obstinately persisted in, heresy."¶ Lastly, Raynaudus tells us, "the deniers are by many, if not by all, beyond the Alps and Pyrenees, accounted heretics, at least materially."** When he saith materially, he meaneth in the

* Nisi fide divina credamus ejusmodi Pontifices esse successores Petri, nihil est quod possumus fide divina credere. Casp. de Fide, Disp. 2. sect. 6.

† Pontifex non posset nos obligare ad credendum de fide id quod definit ut dictum a Deo; nisi de fide esset ipsum habere potestatem definiendi et infallibilem assistentiam Sp. S. Mart. de Fide, Disp. 9. sect. 6.

‡ Si non esset de fide, quod (Papa) sit infallibilis; ergo non est de fide quod non fallatur. Rhod. de Fide, quæst. 3. sect. 1. §. 3.

§ Veritatem religionis fundamentalem, articulum fidei ex præcipuis unum, cui innitantur cæteri omnes. Abelly, apud Estrix Diat. ass. 47.

|| Neminem posse sine crimine hæreseos doctrinam tenere contrariam Pontificis fidei omnibus fidelibus propositæ. Vern. apud eundem.

¶ Censeo qui absolute negat infallibilem esse Papam—errare haud dubie in fide, et si in errore obstinatus perseveret, hæreticum fore. Mac. ibidem.

** Qui Pontifici eam infallibilitatem abrogant, a plerisque, sin minus ab omnibus trans Alpes et Pyrenæos habentur hæretici, saltem materialiter. Rayn. αὐτὸς ἔφη, punct. 5.

language of the Schoolmen that the opinion of these deniers is accounted in itself heretical, and wants only obstinacy in the defenders to make it downright and formal heresy. Now this obstinacy is judged of partly by the external proposition of the truth opposed to heresy, partly by the internal disposition of the mind. Now because the latter is known to God alone, and all truths are not sufficiently proposed to all, therefore those of whom Raynaudus speaks, do wisely in laying down that limitation of material heresy. But this salvo will not serve the learned disbelievers of the Papal infallibility. For since it is as clearly revealed to them, as it is to the believers of it; either those are rank heretics, whom a sufficient proposition will not convince, or these fools, who assent to an opinion insufficiently proposed.

Thus indeed these writers: but others are of a contrary opinion, as Bellarmine, Vasquez, Tannerus, Duval, the Valem-burgii, Gab. Boyvin, and others, who strenuously maintain the infallibility of the Pope, and yet deny it to be of faith. Duval produceth three weighty reasons.*

1. "For that it hath been nowhere defined." 2. "That the opposite doctors, as Alliacensis, Gerson, &c. were never condemned." 3. "In that the Scripture doth not clearly enough teach this infallibility." The two first reasons are also made use of by Bellarmine, Vasquez, the Valem-burgii, and Boyvin. And indeed this opinion is most consonant to the received principles of their Church. For if nothing can be an article of faith, of which their Divines freely dispute unregarded by the Church: this certainly cannot be, whose truth hath been and is to this day fiercely disputed of among them, even by Bellarmine's confession, from the time of the Council of Constance; the Church all this while inflicting no censure on either party. Besides, if the infallibility of the Pope be of faith, it will then be heresy to deny it, as we saw some before asserting. Hadrianus Florentius therefore was an heretic, (who affirms "the Pope can err even in those things which concern faith, by asserting heresy by his determination or decretal, and that many Popes have been heretics,")† and the Church will be

* Duval. de Potest. Pont. Part 2. quæst. 1.

† Certum est, quod possit (Pontifex) errare, etiam in iis quæ tangunt fidem, Hæresin per suam determinationem vel Decretalem asserendo: plures enim fuerunt Pontifices Rom. hæretici. Hadr. in Dictat. in 4. Sentent.

a favouress of heresy in that she afterwards promoted Hadrian to the Popedom, without first requiring of him an abjuration of his heresy.

Again, if this opinion be heretical, the Council of Basil will be heretical, that defined it and vigorously maintained it : the Sorbon and Gallican clergy heretics, that teach it : the Pope a favourer of heresy, who daily conferreth abbeyes, bishoprics, and cardinal's hats on notorious heretics, giveth them places in Councils, and maintains communion with them : the whole Latin Church will have been divided in point of faith, and part infected with heresy, part with the communion of heretics for many ages, from the Council of Constance, according to Bellarmine, but even from the time of Firmilian (or the middle of the third century) according to Lupus, who assigns Firmilian to be the first opposer of Papal infallibility, and makes St. Basil to have been his successor in opinion, as well as in the see of Cæsarea ; that thenceforward this heresy got ground among the Grecians, insomuch as the Pelagians condemned by the Popes, appealed to the Council at Ephesus, hoping their sentence might easily be reversed by the Greek bishops, as not allowing the Pope's infallibility. If so, then this dissension is very ancient in the Church ; which if it toucheth faith, then a pestilent heresy hath for many ages been connived at by the Church and Councils. But whatsoever becomes of Lupus's calculation, certain it is this dissension hath continued from the Council of Constance, so that if it be concerning a matter of faith, the Church of Rome hath all this while wanted that glorious character of unity of faith, which she so much boasts of.

CHAP. VII.

That it is not certain, whether the Pope in defining used all diligence necessary to a right definition, or whether he observed all the wonted solemnities in publishing his decree.

ANOTHER scruple next ariseth, no less weighty than the former. For granting we may be assured of the infallibility of the Pope, it is still to be inquired which be those decrees of

his that are infallibly true. For that all are not so our adversaries confess. Many things are by them required, and besides those before-mentioned, two other conditions, *viz* diligence of the Pope in well examining the question to be defined, and observation of the due solemnities in publishing the definition. For the first, they require that he diligently consult Scripture and tradition, address himself by prayers to God, and omit nothing which may assist him in finding out the truth. So Tapperus,* Canus,† Cellotius,‡ Bagotius,§ and many others, but above all Duval,|| who not only proposeth, but also accurately demonstrates the necessity of these conditions.

But who can assure us, that this requisite diligence was always used? or as often as a Papal decree comes forth, are we to suspend our assent, till we be ascertained that nothing requisite was omitted by the Pope? If that be true, there will be few decrees, to which we owe assent and obedience. Canus, Bellarmine, Suarez, Duval, Martinonus, Rhodius, and many others answer, that as he which promiseth the end, promiseth also the means of that end; so Christ in promising infallibility to the Pope, must be supposed likewise to have promised that he would take care the Pope should never omit anything necessary for finding out of truth, and declaring it to others when found. I will not now inquire, whether this be consonant to what they teach about the controversy of the Aids of Grace. I only ask, whether what they allege be certain. If not, our faith will always fluctuate, and ever be uncertain. That it is not certain, Tapperus ingenuously confesseth.¶ “Whether,” saith he, “if it should happen, that the Pope proceeds wrong, would God hinder him going about to curse, as he did Balaam, or make him retract his judgment, as the counsel given by Nathan the prophet to King David? It is not certain.” Nay, that it is absolutely false, may be proved by many examples. Did Benedict II. examine well what he went about when he condemned Julian Toletanus’s book, which he was afterwards forced to approve? Did Vigilius,

* Tapp. orat. 3. † Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5.

‡ Cell. de Hier. lib. 4. cap. 10.

§ Bag. Instit. Theol.

|| Duval. de Pot. Pont. sect. 2. quæst. 5.

¶ Si contingeret eum (Pontificem) perperam procedere; an Deus eum volentem maledicere prohiberet, sicut impedivit. Balaam an potius retractari faceret ejus judicium, sicut, &c. Certum non est, Tapp. loc. cit.

who sometimes condemned, sometimes defended the *Tria Capitula*? Did John VIII. who, notwithstanding his oath, the decrees of his predecessors, and sanctions of three Councils, restored Photius, and reinforced the schism?

Another very evident example of this is afforded by the suppression of Sixtus V.'s Bibles, which alone might evince three things; that the Popes are not always sufficiently diligent in their definitions, that they can err in any decrees, and that it is not known when the requisite solemnities are observed in the promulgation, which was my second argument.* The case was this: The Council of Trent, in authorising the vulgar version, had desired it might be correctly and accurately set forth, leaving the execution of this matter to the Pope. That this might be well done, great industry was used. At last, after forty-six years, Sixtus V. published the edition, prefixing a bull to it, whereby he commanded it to be received by all men: and wherein, having prefaced that the matter belonged wholly to his cognizance, and that all necessary diligence was abundantly used by himself, and the Cardinals and doctors employed about the work; he pronounceth by that irrevocable decree, with the consent and counsel of his brethren, of his own certain knowledge, and the fulness of apostolic power, that this is undoubtedly to be accounted that very edition, which was made authentic by the Council of Trent, and now approved by himself: and by the apostolic power delivered unto him by our Lord, commandeth, "that everywhere, and in all cases, it be received for true, legitimate, authentic, and undoubted; and all future editions be corrected by this, and not the least syllable be changed, added, or omitted upon pain of the greater excommunication." This certainly, if anything, was a question of faith and right, being concerning the true rule of faith, and pure word of God. Sixtus also omitted no words, whereby he might make his decree valid. Yet Clement VII. awhile after undid all, revoked his predecessor's decree, suppressed his edition, and published another of his own, wherein he maketh more than 2000 corrections of Sixtus's edition, as our learned Dr. James hath in a peculiar treatise shewed. To this so fatal an overthrow of the Papal

* Ad nos totum hoc judicium proprie et specialiter pertinet.—Hac perpetuo valitura Constitutione, de Venerab. Fratrum consensu et Consilio, da certa sua scientia, et Apostolicæ potestatis plenitudine,—Apostolica sibi a Domino tradita autoritate.

infallibility Tannerus,* the Jesuit, replieth, that Sixtus's decree was not authentic, nor did oblige, because not promulged in the due form, that is, not affixed, or at least not the whole due time, to the doors of St. Peter's Church, the Apostolic Chancery, and in Flora's Field: and this he proveth by the hearsay testimonies of Bellarmine, and Ferdinandus Albertus the Jesuit: although in the printed copies of the bull, the messengers' names are found inscribed, testifying that all the wonted solemnities of promulgation were observed.

To this Launoy† rejoins, that these are mere tricks to establish the authority of the Roman Court, and impose upon unwary men, if yet any can be found so foolish as to regard them. Hath Christ therefore appropriated the infallibility, conferred on his Vicar, to walls and doors, that his definitions cannot be infallible, unless these petty punctilios be observed? That these pretences of Tannerus, Vasquez, Bellarmine, and others, are madness and foppery, frivolous impertinence, and shameful nonsense.‡ That "promulgation signifies nothing to the Pope's infallibility; nor addeth any truth or falsehood to the definitions, but supposeth it in them. For if it be false, the promulgation will not make it true, although it be published by a thousand messengers, and affixed to St. Peter's doors to all eternity: that Sixtus in defining that, for which his bull was abrogated, did plainly err; and that Clement in abrogating his bull, and suppressing his edition, ought himself to have believed this, at least gave others occasion to believe it." Thus Launoy.

I might add, it hath hitherto been believed, that this infallibility doth proceed from the Holy Ghost. But when should the Holy Ghost confer it? Surely, if ever, while the question is discussing and defining. Whereas now when the Pope hath done all that lay in his power, and nothing remains but only some petty circumstances of promulgation to be performed by servile and illiterate messengers; then only, and not till then, doth this infallibility exert itself, which makes the Pope fallible, and the messengers infallible. For the first may pronounce somewhat false, the latter nothing but what is true. But passing by all these things, suppose this excuse well

* Tann. de Fide, Disp. 1. quæst. 4. dub. 6.

† Laun. Epist. part 1. p. 144. [Colon. Allobrog. 1731.]

‡ Deliramenta loquitur, Iberas nænias sectatur, et frivola Siculis gerris vaniora Theologiæ importat. Hæc referre me pudet.

grounded, yet have I obtained, what was to prove that there may be sometime wanting in the Pope that diligence which is necessary to define well. For this consists not in the circumstances of promulgation, but in examining the question, inquiring the truth, and weighing the reasons. What if after all it be not duly published by messengers : that concerns not my argument, nor hinders the precedent negligence of the Pope.

Besides, if without these solemnities of promulgation no bulls be obligatory, the authority of the decrees of all ancient Popes may be justly doubted of. For who can assure us that all these circumstances were then observed, when it is the height of folly to think they were so much as known ? Either these therefore are not necessary, or the ancient decretals are all void.

But suppose they are necessary : that they are not wanting to this bull of Sixtus, the subscriptions of the messengers do testify. I know it is pretended that they were added by anticipation only to hasten the edition. But that serveth my purpose as well. For must every one that receiveth a bull, suspend his obedience, till he shall ride post to Rome, and consult the registers ? And hence appears the uncertainty of the second condition required to the infallibility of any Papal decree. For if the testimony of the bull itself be sometimes false, and we be forced to pick up the truth from flying reports, how shall we be ever assured, that the decree was duly promulged ?

One thing more we may observe, that even by Tanner's confession some reported, that the decree of Sixtus was really affixed in the due places, and taken down after his death. This Compton* also dares not deny, but leaves it to the reader to be believed or rejected by him. But if the bull was not taken down, till Sixtus died, then Sixtus erred as long as he lived, and promoted error as far as in him lay ; and, what is the chief of all, used not the necessary diligence to avoid error.

* Compt. in 2. 2. Disp. 22. sect. 5.

CHAP. VIII.

That it is not certain, whether the Pope defineth according to his own mind, or against his conscience ; and that this latter case may happen, is proved by many examples.

WE are not yet got rid of our doubts and perplexities. Those which we have already mentioned, are external, and obvious to the senses, if not of all, yet at least of some. Whereas here is one unknown and impenetrable to all but himself, to wit, his own conscience. For to judge right it is required, that he pronounce what he thinks is true, and not decree against his judgment for any fear or force. That the Pope notwithstanding hath not always such an assistance of the Holy Ghost, as constantly to withstand these attempts, I shall demonstrate by four examples, those of Marcellinus, Liberius, Paschal II. and Eugenius IV.

That Pope Marcellinus, under Diocletian's persecution, did deny the faith, publicly sacrifice to idols, and was for that reason deposed in the synod of Sinuessa, is acknowledged by Pope Damasus, or whosoever be author of the *Liber Pontificalis*, by Nicolas I. Luitprandus, Marianus Scotus, Martinus Polonus, Gerson, Cusanus, Hosius, Platina, Papyrius Masso, Bellarmine in the first edition of his *Controversies*, Baronius in the second edition of his *Annals*, Amicus, Emanuel a Schelstrate, and many others. I know indeed that some deny it, relying on the silence of Eusebius, and testimony of St. Austin, who saith the Donatists objected this to Marcellinus, but could not prove it. Whether the fact be true or no, it is enough for me that Pope Nicolas I. and many others thought so. Baronius* insinuates this, when in the first edition of his *Annals*, where he endeavours to elevate the faith of this History, he excuseth himself, for opposing the common and almost universal opinion. And Natalis Alexandert† observes, that the Roman Breviary favours this belief. Whence it is evident, that this thing seemed neither impossible nor improbable to the whole Roman Church ; which shews, that according to the

* Non tanti sumus, ut de Marcellini lapsu opinionem ore omnium diffamatam antiquare possimus ; quæ et communi fere omnium consensu appareat postea esse credita. Bar. ad An. 302. Edit. Plant. p. 800.

† Nat. Hist. Eccl. Sæc. 3. Dis. 20.

opinion commonly received in her, the Popes may possibly be moved by some vehement perturbation of mind to betray the faith. Bellarmine's* excuse here will not avail, that Marcellinus taught nothing against the faith, was no heretic or infidel, but in external act, for fear of death. For (to pass by the accusation of the Synod of Sinuessa, that he did it for the love of money) even this demonstrates what I was to prove, that a Pope may be induced by some perturbation of mind, as fear or covetousness, to violate his conscience, and betray the truth.

Liberius comes next, who after he had bravely a while resisted the threats of Constantius, either wearied out with the hardship of his exile, or moved with the desire of recovering his see possessed by Fælix, subscribed to the Arian heresy, and the sentence against Athanasius. Bellarmine pleads much in his excuse: the sum of which is this, that Liberius's fault consisted only in condemning Athanasius, and communicating with heretics; that himself neither taught heresy, nor was an heretic but in external action; lastly, that the confession which he subscribed, was orthodox, although the word *ὁμοούσιος* were wanting; and that according to Sozomen, before his departure from Sirmium, he published a confession, wherein he condemned the Heterousians. But this answer of Bellarmine's is wholly insufficient. For 1, whereas he pretends Liberius was an heretic only in external act, that no less serves our purpose, as manifesting that a Pope may be wrought by his passions to pronounce in matters of faith against his own knowledge and judgment. 2. If he condemned Athanasius, it was not because he was by the false accusations of the Arians induced to believe Athanasius guilty, but only that he might free himself from the miseries of banishment, and the fears of death: as Athanasius witnesseth.† In the first case he had only erred in matter of fact; but now he failed in constancy: which also proves my assertion. 3. To communicate with known heretics, as Bellarmine acknowledgeth Liberius to have done, is to favour heresy, and add authority to it. Christianus Lupus largely handles this *ad præscript*. Tertulliani, cap. 41, where he strongly urgeth the example of the whole clergy of

* Non nisi actu externo ob metum mortis. Bell.

† Ὁ δὲ Λιβήριος ἐξορισθεὶς ὕστερον μετὰ διετῇ χρόνον ὤκλασε, καὶ φοβηθεὶς τὸν ἀπειλούμενον θάνατον ὑπέγραψεν. Athanas. Epist. ad Solit.

Rome, who separated themselves from the communion of Pope Anastasius, merely because he had not denied communion to a Deacon of Thessalonica of Acacius's party, who yet was far from an open heretic. 4. Where Bellarmine denieth Liberius to have subscribed to an heretical confession of faith; this is manifestly repugnant to the plain testimonies of the ancients. We shall produce some. Liberius* himself in his epistle to the eastern Bishops (who were Arians) tells them that "he is convinced the condemnation of Athanasius was just, whom therefore he looked on as excommunicate, and would maintain peace and unanimity with them. That he subscribed at Sirmium their Catholic faith, expounded unto him by Demophilus (an Arian bishop.)" And in his epistle to Valens, Ursacius, and Germinius (the heads of the Arian party) saith, "I profess to hold communion with all your Bishops of the Catholic Church: and excommunicate all those which shall dissent from this our blessed concord." St. Hilary† denounceth a threefold anathema against Liberius for this subscription, and calls him "a prevaricator of the faith," and in another place saith, "the heresy penned at Sirmium, which Liberius calls Catholic, expounded to him by Demophilus," &c. And tells Constantius, that "he sent back Liberius to Rome with no less impiety, than that wherewith he had before banished him;" intimating, that he had made him an heretic. St. Jerome‡ in his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers, saith, "Fortunatianus is to be detested, for that he first broke the courage of Liberius, and

* Ubi cognovi juste vos illum (Athanasium) condemnasse; mox consensum meum commodavi sententiis vestris—Itaque amoto Athanasio a communione omnium dico me cum omnibus vobis pacem et unitatem habere. Nam—Dominus noster et frater communis, Demophilus, qui dignatus est fidem vestram et Catholicam exponere, quæ Sirmii suscepta est,—Hanc ego libenti animo suscepi, etc. Liber. Epist. 7. Me autem cum omnibus vobis Episcopis Ecclesiæ Catholicæ pacem habere his literis scire debetis, fratres charissimi.—Quicumque autem a pace et concordia nostra dissenserit, sciat se separatam a nostra communione.

† Anathema tibi a me dictum Liberi, et sociis tuis. Iterum tibi Anathema, et tertio Prævaricator Liberi. Hil. in Fragm. Perfidiam apud Sirmium conscriptam, quam dicit Liberius Catholicam, a Demophilo sibi expositam. Id. Ibid. O te miserum, qui nescio utrum majori impietate relegaveris (Liberium) quam remiseris. Id. lib. ad Constantium.

‡ In hoc habetur detestabilis, quod Liberium primus sollicitavit ac fregit, et ad subscriptionem hæreseos impulit, Hier. in Fortunat. Liberius tædio victus exilii, et in hæretica pravitate subscribens, Romam quasi victor intraverat. Id. in Chron.

persuaded him to subscribe to heresy :” and in his Chronicle, relates how Liberius “worn out with the toils of banishment, and having subscribed to heretical pravity, entered Rome as a conqueror.” Auxilius takes it for a thing most certain. “Who knows not,” saith he, “that Liberius* subscribed to the Arian heresy ?” which he repeats in another place. The old Roman Breviary,† in the festival of St. Eusebius the Confessor,‡ saith, “Liberius consented to the Arian heresy.” To these produced by Launoy I shall add three others. Philostorgius§ affirms that Liberius and Hosius subscribed against the Consubstantiality, and against Athanasius. Sozomen|| saith, “that Constantius sending for Liberius, ἐξιάσατο ὁμολογεῖν μὴ εἶναι τῷ πατρὶ τὸν υἱὸν ὁμοούσιον forced him to confess that the Son is not consubstantial to the Father :” where may be noted the disingenuous fraud of Valesius, who renders ἐξιάσατο only by *cæpit compellere*, he began (or went about to compel him). Lastly, Peter Damian¶ writes thus, “Liberius is known to have subscribed to the Arian heresy, deceived with the error of perfidiousness,” and saith, that “after he was become an apostate, he lived yet six years.” Many things might here be added to confute Bellarmine’s answer, which because they belong more immediately to the controversy of the Papal infallibility, I shall omit them.

The third example is that of Pope Paschal II. All the world knows what quarrels were formerly between the Popes and Emperors about the investiture of bishops. The Emperors would suffer no bishops in their dominions, but what received investiture from their hands. The Popes excommunicated both the givers and receivers of it. While the controversy was yet hot, the Emperor Henry V. takes Pope Paschal prisoner, and extorteth from him a privilege, whereby the Pope yields and confirms to him and his successors the right of in-

* Quis nesciat, quod Liberius Arianæ hæresi subscripserit? Aux. de Ordin. lib. 1. cap. 25.

† Lib. 2. cap. 1.

‡ Cum doleret (Eusebius) Liberium Papam Arianæ hæresi consensisse. Breviar. Rom.

§ Κατὰ μὲν τοῦ ὁμοουσίου, καὶ μὴν κατὰ γε τοῦ Ἀθανασίου ὑπογράψαι. Philost. lib. 4. cap. 3.

|| Soz. lib. 4. cap. 15.

¶ Poro Liberius perfidiæ deceptus errore Arianæ hæresi subscripsisse dignoscitur.—Liberius itaque factus Apostata sex annorum spatia supervixit. Pet. Dam. Epist.

vestiture for ever : forbidding the metropolitans to consecrate any bishops or abbots but what have been first invested by the Emperor.* Many then cried out the faith was violated, and heresy established by this concession, particularly Goffridus Vindocinensis, out of whom Christ. Lupus cites much to this purpose.† And the whole Council of Vien, over whom Guido, archbishop of Vien, the Pope's legate presided, wrote thus to Pope Paschal, in their synodical epistle, "We have diligently examined the privilege by the Emperor extorted from your Majesty (for so they call him), therefore by the direction of the Holy Ghost we have defined laic investiture to be heresy, and condemned that privilege."‡

Nor did Paschal§ himself defend his action, but in a full Council recanted his error, acknowledged his fault, recalled his privilege, and submitted himself to the censure and correction of the Council, pleading that he was compelled to that sin by great necessities, which being done, Girardus bishop of Angoulesme stood up (as the acts of the Council published by Baluzius testify),|| and in the name of the Pope and the Council, condemned, abrogated, and excommunicated this privilege, declaring the reason to be, because elect bishops were therein forbid to be consecrated, before they had received investiture, "which (say they) is against the Holy Ghost and canonical institution." Now let the reader judge whether that can be defended which the Pope himself confesseth to be *pravè factum*, wickedly done, and which the Council defineth to be "against the Holy Ghost and canonical institution?" If the Pope can by a solemn decree permit wicked things, certainly he must be fallible, if not in faith, yet in manners ; if not

* Illam dignitatis prærogativam nos dilectioni tuæ concedimus, præsentis privilegii pagina confirmamus, ut regni tui Episcopis investituram virgæ et annuli conferas. Si quis item, etc. apud Marcam de Concord. lib. 8. cap. 20.

† Lup. diss. de Laica Antist. Invest.

‡ Privilegium, quod a vestra Majestate violenter extorsit, tractare diligenter curavimus.—Igitur dictante Sp. S. investituram omnem de manu laica hæresin esse judicavimus, et scriptum illud, quod Rex a vestra simplicitate extorsit, damnavimus.

§ Scriptum illud, quod magnis necessitatibus coactus—feci,—sicut prave factum cognosco, ita prave factum confiteor, et omnino corrigi—desidero, etc.

|| Nos omnes in hoc S. Concilio coram D. Papa congregati—judicio Sp. S. damnavimus, etc. Et hoc ideo damnatum est, quod in eo continetur—quod est contra Sp. S. et canonicam institutionem.

in the *credenda*, yet in the *agenda* of religion. For what Lupus* pleads, that Paschal's fault was like that of St. Peter, carried away with the dissimulation of the Jews, Gal. ii. of which Tertullian saith, it was a fault of conversation, not of doctrine; that I say was wholly vain and frivolous. For St. Peter's fault consisted wholly in withdrawing his conversation from the Gentile converts. But whoever accounted privileges a matter of conversation? The one may be performed by every body, the other by none but persons in authority. "A privilege," saith Martin Bonacina,† "is granted by him who can make a law." So Azorius, Suarez, and Salas. "The reason is, because a privilege is partly a law, partly a dispensation of the law." Paschal therefore made a law which was to be for ever valid. St. Peter neither said, writ, nor decreed any thing. What more unlike than these two? Nothing can here be said, but what Paschal himself pleaded, that he was constrained with great difficulties. This I do not deny; and it proves my assertion, *viz.* that Popes may be induced by fear to decree against their conscience.

The last example is that of Pope Eugenius IV. who having called the Council of Basil, a little after dissolved it, and removed it to Bononia. The Council would not obey, but continued to sit, and consequently, according to the principles of our adversaries, became thenceforward unlawful. Wherefore, Leo. X.‡ in the Council of Lateran calls it a false Council, or rather a conventicle, which after that translation deserved no longer to be called a Council. Yet Eugenius§ revoked his own dissolution, and pronounced the Council had, notwithstanding his translation, been always catholic and lawful. Now the Council of Basil, after the Pope's dissolution was either lawful or unlawful. If lawful, Leo. X. and the Lateran Council erred. If unlawful, Eugenius yet erred worse in legitimating a Council guilty of so great a crime, as is rebellion against the head of the Church. For it cannot be said the Council

* Lup. loc. sit.

† Privilegium ab eo conceditur, a quo lex ferri potest. Ita Azorius, etc. Ratio est, tum quia privilegium est quædam lex; tum quia est quædam dispensatio in lege. Bon. de Legib. disp. 1. quæst. 2. § 2.

‡ Conciliabulum, seu potius Conventiculum, quæ præsertim post hujusmodi translationem Concilium amplius appellari non merebatur.

§ Decernimus et declaramus præfatum generale Concilium Basileense a tempore prædictæ inchoationis suæ legitime inchoatum fuisse et esse, etc.

was really unlawful, but that Eugenius gave it that validity and authority which it wanted, and purged away its crimes. Eugenius himself professeth the contrary in his revocatory bull of his letters of dissolution. Nothing therefore can be answered here, but what Duval allegeth, that this bull was extorted by fear.* The Cardinals threatening, that unless he expedited his bulls of adhesion to the Council, they would all forsake him. This answer grants to me, what I was to demonstrate, that Popes may be prevailed on by fear to decree against truth and right. So that this being granted, as it cannot be denied, no decrees of Popes are to be received, before we be assured that the Pope was forced by no fear or threats to publish them; which can very difficultly be known, if at all. Besides, if fear can extort a false or unjust decree from the Pope, why may not any other perturbation, as hatred, anger, or covetousness, do the same? Well saith Canus in a like argument: "He which will yield to fear, must necessarily yield to covetousness or any inordinate desire." Nothing therefore is more uncertain than the Papal decrees. For who can tell what induced the Pope to decree this or that? "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?"†

CHAP. IX.

That it is not certain, whether he who calls himself the Pope, and is commonly accounted the Pope, be really such.

THERE remains yet another inextricable doubt. For suppose we have overcome all the precedent difficulties, and found some relief for so many uncertainties; it is yet to be inquired whether he which makes the decrees, and proposeth them to be observed by the Church, be the true and lawful Pope, as he is commonly esteemed. For while this is doubtful, we may justly doubt whether his decrees be obligatory. Now this matter may by many ways become uncertain. As first, it

* Respondeo Eugenium, cum hæc scriberet, tunc a quibusdam Cardinalibus perterritum, et ni Bullas adhæSIONIS Concilio expediret, se ab eo omnes secessuros. Duvall. Anteloqu. ad Tract. de potest. Pont.

† Qui metu frangitur, is cupiditate etiam frangatur necesse est. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. ii. 11.

sometimes happens, that two or more do at the same time contend for the Papacy, all of which have their several partisans, by whom they are accounted the lawful Popes. Many such schisms have been in the Church, whereof one continued near fifty years. The knowledge of the true Pope was then so difficult, that Duval and Maimbourg observe two œcumenical Councils, those of Pisa and Constance, dared not to examine and define the matter, but thought it more prudent to depose all of them and create a new one. How then shall private men be able to know what Councils themselves could not find out? But neither then also, when one only claims the papacy and possesseth the throne, doth it certainly appear, whether he be a lawful Pope; and that for many reasons.

For in the first place, if he be a heretic, a schismatic, an infidel, or an atheist, he cannot surely be Pope. For as Turrecremata saith well, "How shall he be head of the Church, who is no member of the Church?" Gregory à Valentia,* and many with him, distinguish between an open heretic or infidel and a secret one, asserting the first cannot be a member of the Church, or Pope, the latter may, for this reason chiefly, because otherwise confusions and dangers could not be avoided in the Church, if the actions of secret heretics and schismatics were *ipso facto* invalid. Yet he acknowledgeth in the same place, that the contrary opinion is held by the greatest men in the Church of Rome, Aquinas, Turrecremata, Sylvester (who affirms this to be the common opinion of all the doctors), Paludanus, Augustinus Anconitanus, Ulricus, Cajetanus (at least as to what concerns heresy), and Alphonsus à Castro. Whence this at least is gathered, that Valentia's opinion is not certain, and the contrary not improbable: which is sufficient for my purpose. For whether true or false, matters little in this case, provided nothing be certain on either side.

Further, those who imagine the Pope forfeits not his dignity, unless he be an open heretic, agree not among themselves. Some think him *ipso facto* deprived without expecting any sentence, some not till sentence is pronounced. But these latter herein shamefully betray the Pope's superiority to a Council, which they had undertaken to defend. For if a Pope fallen into heresy shall retain his dignity until he be judged and deprived by a Council, the Council will be thereby superior to a

* Val. tom. 3. disp. 3. quæst. 15. punct. 3.

true and undoubted Pope. Again, how shall a Council condemn a Pope for heresy, if it cannot certainly define what is heresy? which according to these divines cannot be done by a Council destitute of its head, such as that Council must necessarily be, which deposeth the Pope for heresy, But of that in another place. Bellarmine, although far more wary and circumspect than Duval, thought the Pope by manifest heresy fell *ipso facto* from his dignity; so that by a Council he is not so much deposed, as pronounced to be deposed. But since that is called manifest heresy, which is declared by some outward sign, as words or writing, nor doth it matter whether it be manifest to few or many; there will always remain a doubt, whether he who is accounted orthodox, be not in his mind a heretic, infidel, or atheist, and hath not revealed his heresy to some of his intimate friends and confidants. For that once supposed, he cannot be Pope. Nay, Bannes asserts, "that he which speaks out his heresy by words, although no man hears him, is not to be accounted a mere mental heretic, but doth thereby incur the sentence of excommunication."*

If you ask, whether there were ever any such Popes; the most noble Jo. Fr. Picus Mirandula† shall answer for me. "We remember," saith he, "another Pope so esteemed and ordained, whom good men believed neither was nor could be Pope, as he which believed no God, and exceeded the utmost pitch of infidelity; as his simony and infinite wickednesses did also testify. And it is affirmed he confessed to some of his domestics, he believed no God, even then when he sat in the Papal chair. And I have heard of another Pope, who affirmed to one of his confidants, that he did not believe the immortality of the soul." To this we may add the express confession of Coster,‡ the Jesuit, "We confess," saith he, "the successor of Peter may be an idolater, a private heretic, and in secret exercise diabolic arts."

* Bann. in 22. quæst. 11. art. 4.

† Alium meminimus pontificem creditum et ordinatum, quem tamen præstantes viri putarent nec pontificem esse nec esse posse, utpote qui nullum Deum crederet, omne infidelitatis culmen excederet, &c. namque fassum eum affirmabatur domesticis quibusdam nullum se deum, aliquando etiam dum pontificiam sedem teneret, credidisse. Et alium audivi pontificem, qui familiari cuidam asseruerat, apud se animarum immortalitatem minime creditam. Pic. Theor. 4.

‡ Fatemur fieri posse, ut Petri successor idola colat, apud se forte de fide non recte sentiat, adeoque diabolicis artibus operam navet. Coster. Enchirid. Controv. cap. 3.

Secondly, It may be that the reputed Pope be for some unknown reason incapable of that dignity ; as if he be not baptized, or hath not received holy orders. For the Council of Florence* hath defined baptism to be the door to the other sacrament ; and in the third book of the Decretals, tit. 43, it is commanded both by the Council of Compeign and by Innocent III. that if a presbyter, whom all accounted to have been baptized, shall afterwards appear not to have been baptized, he be first baptized, and then anew ordained. Wherefore if he be either not baptized, or not ordained, he cannot be Pope. But either or both may easily happen, since to the validity of those, as well as other sacraments, our adversaries require the intention of him that confers the sacrament, which can be known to God alone.

Thirdly, It may be that he who is commonly accounted Pope, may be unduly created, and for some canonical impediment, manifest or occult, be incapable of the Papacy. "For," saith Lupus,† "all canonical irregularities of the person are not taken away by election to the Popedom." For which reason he there observeth, "Pope Constantine was justly deposed, as being of a layman immediately made Pope ; whereby he became irregular by the canon of Sardica ; and that, as is affirmed by approved authors, Clement VII. dared not call a General Council against the Lutherans ; because, being a bastard, he feared to be declared irregular."

Fourthly, He who is elected Pope, may be *ipso facto* excommunicate, and so not capable of that dignity. So Picus Mirandula‡ tells us of "a learned and sober man in his time, and he a dignitary of the Church ; who gave it for his opinion, that the then Pope was no Pope, because he had exercised the office of Pope, before he had been elected by two parts of the Cardinals ; whereas the canons provide that such a man shall be so far from being Pope, that he shall be rendered incapable of that dignity, as lying under an anathema." For the like cause it is reported the Jesuits were resolved not to acknowledge Clement VIII. for Pope, if he had condemned Molina, as he intended, because of some flaw in his election. It is an established rule of the Roman conclave, that none be accounted duly elected, but who hath two-third parts of the Cardinals' votes. Cardinal

* Janua Sacramentorum.

† Neque enim gravis canonica personæ vitia per Papalem electionem sanantur. Lup. Schol. ad Conc. viii. p. 1354.

‡ Pic. Theor. 4.

Sanseverino had gained them, and thereby of right became Pope. But while they were giving their votes in the chapel, the dissenting Cardinals crowded in, disturbed those who were taking the votes, and persuaded one of the other Cardinals to withdraw his vote : whereby Sanseverino, although duly elected, missed the chair ; and Aldobrandino was consecrated, who took upon him the name of Clement VIII.

But these perhaps are rare instances. Those which follow are more frequent. It often happens, that the election is not free, but extorted by force, threats, promises, bribes, factions, and the like arts. In which cases the Popes themselves have pronounced the election to be null and irregular, and the elect person an antipope and apostate. So Nicolas II.* declared in a Lateran Council, “that all elections procured by money, or favour, or popular tumult, or military violence, should be null and void ; and the elect Pope accounted† not apostolical but apostatical, to be anathematized by the whole Church as a robber, and by any means deposed.”

But Julius II.‡ is much more rigorous, who with the consent of the Cardinals decreed and defined, “that simony was true and undoubted heresy,” and that “in whatsoever election that intervened by giving, receiving, or promising of money, or any other goods or benefices, the election should be *ipso facto* void ; and the elect, although he had the concurrent votes of two-thirds of, or even all, the Cardinals, should be no Pope, but made for ever incapable of that or any other ecclesiastical dignity, and be held and detected by all Christians as an apostate, simoniac, hæresiarch, magician, heathen and publican :” and that “the person thus simoniacally elected, shall never become regular, by any subsequent enthronization or prescription of time, or even the adoration or obedience of all the cardinals.” Thus these Popes, truly and wisely. For Christ had said long before, “Verily, verily I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”§ And the

* Plat. in Nicol. II.

† Non Apostolicus, sed Apostaticus.

‡ Sicut de vera et indubitata hæresi. Tanquam Apostaticus, Simoniacus, Hæresiarcha, Magus, Ethnicus, et Publicanus vitari. Nec hujusmodi Simoniace electus per subsequentem ipsius inthronizationem, seu temporis cursum, aut etiam omnium Cardinalium adorationem seu obedientiam ullo unquam tempore convalescat. Habetur apud Raynald.

§ John x. 1.

Apostle after him, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."* Whosoever, therefore, obtain the Popedom by evil arts, and enter not by the door, but leap into the chair by wickedness, are no lawful pastors, but thieves and robbers, and ravening wolves.

But you will say, Were there ever such Popes? I answer, why not? Certainly, the very constitutions of Nicolas, and Julius, and others which might be added, prove it is possible, and insinuate that it hath sometimes happened. For those things are not wont to be forbidden, which cannot be performed; and it is a received maxim, "that good laws arise from bad actions."† But we want not frequent examples. For to pass by what we before related out of Picus Mirandula, who knows not that Vigilius obtained the Popedom by three most heinous crimes, by the violent expulsion of his predecessor Silverius, whom falsely accusing of treason, he procured to be banished into the island of Palmeria, and there starved him to death, or as others say, assassinated him; by promising to the Empress Theodora, he would establish the Eutychian heresy; and by notorious simony, giving to Belisarius two centenaries of gold? These things are accurately described by Liberatus, and after him by Baronius. Nor doth what Baronius,‡ Binius,§ Ferrandus,|| and others allege to obscure this matter, avail any thing, to wit, that Vigilius after Silverius's death resigned the Popedom, and would not resume it till he was canonically elected. For to omit the insufficiency of this excuse, since Vigilius and all his adherents were excommunicated by Silverius, and so even these pretended canonical electors became excommunicate; to pass by this, the pretence itself is false, being related by no one writer of those or the following times. They produce only Anastasius saying, that the see of Silverius was vacant six days. But this, say they, could not be while Silverius was alive, for he was all along the lawful Pope. *Ergo*, after his death Vigilius resigned, and was chosen anew. A worthy argument! As if those who write the lives of Popes, are not wont to assign to them only that time, wherein they quietly enjoyed their dignities. Papebrochius observeth this: "Baronius," saith he, "making Silverius's Popedom to last four years, defers his death to the year

* Heb. v. 4.

† Ex malis moribus bonæ leges.

‡ Bar. ad ann. 540.

§ Bin. in Vigil.

|| Ferr. Traite de l'Eglise, chap. 3.

540. But we rather choose, according to the usual style of the ancient catalogues, more than once observed before, to reckon only that time while he sat at Rome ; although he never ceased to be Pope by the injury he suffered.”* But to take away all pretence, I say, that Anastasius not only might respect the time of his deposition, and not of his death, but that also he really did so. For to whom doth Anastasius reckon the two years, or thereabouts, wherein, according to Baronius, Vigilius possessed the see of Silverius yet alive? They say to Silverius, I say to Vigilius, and demonstrate it past all doubt. For if Anastasius had assigned those two years to Silverius, he would have given to him in all above three years, to wit, those two years and the seventeen months that he enjoyed his see quietly. Yet he reckons thus in the whole, “Silverius sat one year, five months, and eleven days;”† assigning to him only that time which passed between his election and expulsion. The case is no less clear in Vigilius. Baronius computes, that almost eighteen years passed from the ejection of Silverius to the death of Vigilius. Just so many doth Anastasius assign to Vigilius’s papacy. “He sat,” saith he, “seventeen years, six months, twenty-six days.”‡ It is manifest, therefore, Anastasius assigns the time that Silverius survived his expulsion to the Poppedom of Vigilius ; and consequently that these six days of vacancy of the see immediately followed not the death, but the expulsion of Silverius. So that this whole story of the resignation and new election of Vigilius is a mere fable. Nor doth Papebrochius deny this. “This resignation,” saith he, “is asserted gratis, as not necessary for Vigilius, who could not want specious reasons to declare the consecration of Silverius null, as made against the canons, and not certainly enough purged by the subsequent consent of the clergy, which seemed not wholly free, but extorted by fear.”§ Thus he, whereby

* Baronius integrum quadriennium faciens durare Pontificatum Sylverii, &c. Sed malumus juxta modum loquendi Catalogorum veterum jam alibi observatum plus una vice solum id tempus numerare, quo Romæ sedit ; licet, &c. Pap. Propyl. ad mens. Maium in Vigil. dissert. 13.

† Sedit annum unum, menses quinque, dies undecim.

‡ Sedit annos XVII. menses VI. dies XXVI.

§ Sed gratis asseritur renunciatio minime necessaria ei, cui causæ non deerant in speciem justæ, ob quas poterat judicare ordinationem Silverii nullam fuisse, utpote contra Canones factam, nec per subsecutum Cleri consensum satis certo purgatam, cum neque hic totus liber videretur, sed metu extortus. Id. ibid.

instead of one example of simony he hath given me two, of Vigilius whom he doth not sufficiently purge, and of Silverius. He doth not clear Vigilius ; for whatsoever Silverius was, he ought not to have been falsely accused, oppressed, banished, and murdered by the procurement of Vigilius. Besides, the promises made to Theodora, and the money given to Belisarius, make him guilty of simony, although the see had been duly vacant, or Silverius dead. Now for what Papebrochius insinuates of Silverius's simony, Liberatus writes that Theodatus, king of the Goths, by violence forced the clergy to elect him. So one simoniac succeeded another ; one usurper followed another.

But of this enough. Of the Popes of the tenth age let Genebrard speak. "An age," saith he, "unhappy in this one thing,* that for almost 150 years, about fifty Popes together, from John VII. to Leo IX. degenerated wholly from the virtue of their predecessors, and ought rather to be called renegadoes and apostates, than apostolic, since they entered not in by the gate, but by the back door, *viz.* by the tyranny of the emperors." And in another place, "The Popes of that time, as intruded rather by the emperors, than chosen, were monsters." Or let Baronius be heard :† "What was then the face of the Church of Rome ? how very ugly ! when impudent and filthy whores governed all at Rome ; who changed sees at their pleasure, disposed of bishoprics, and what is dreadful to speak, intruded their gallants into the see of Peter. No mention then made of the clergy electing or consenting, the canons were all trod under foot, decrees of Popes despised, the ancient traditions turned out of doors, and the old customs, sacred rites, and former use of electing Popes wholly extinct." Hence at

* *Seculum hoc uno infœlix, quod per annos fere C. L. Pontifices circiter L.—a virtute majorum prorsus defecerint ; Apotactici, Apostaticive potius, quam Apostolici, quando non per ostium, sed per posticum, i. e. Imperatorum tyrannidem ingrediebantur.* Genebr. Chron. ad ann. 901. *Istius temporis pontifices, ut intrusi ab Impp. potius quam electi, monstra erant.* Id. ad an. 107.

† *Quæ tunc facies S. Romanæ Ecclesiæ ? quam fœdissima ! cum Romæ dominarentur impotentissimæ æque ac sordidissimæ meretrices, quarum arbitrio mutarentur sedes, darentur Episcopi, et quod auditu horrendum et infandum est, intruderentur in sedem Petri earum amasii Pseudo-Pontifices. Nunquam Cleri eligentis vel consentientis postea aliqua mentio : Canones omnes pressi silentio ; Decreta Pontificum suffocata, proscriptæ antiquæ traditiones, veteresque in eligendo pontifice consuetudines, sacrique ritus, et pristinus usus, prorsus extincti.* Bar. ad ann. 908.

every turn he calls the Popes of these times intruders and usurpers, and at the year 897, saith, Boniface* was driven out by Stephen, one intruder by another.

But to descend to particulars. Then was that infamous and scandalous controversy about the Popedom of Formosus. John VIII. had deposed him from the bishopric of Porto. Marinus restored him. Afterwards was himself elected Pope, and held the chair six years, in which time he held a General Council, and was acknowledged by the whole world. Yet after his death his successor Stephen VI. calls a Council, abrogates all his decrees, annuls his ordinations, digs his body out of the grave, puts on it the pontifical robes, and sets it in the papal chair, then solemnly deprives and degrades it, and having cut off his three fore fingers (wherewith he performed ordinations) cast it into Tiber. John IX., who comes next, calls a new Synod, annuls whatsoever Stephen had done, and restoreth the memory and decrees of Formosus. Sergius a while after anathematized Formosus anew, and abrogated whatsoever had been done in his favour by John. This occasioned Auxilius, a writer of those times, to compose his Dialogue against the intestine discord of the Church of Rome (to use Sigebert Gemblacensis's words),† *viz.* "concerning the ordinations, exordinations, and superordinations of the Popes of Rome, and the exordinations and superordinations of those ordained by them." And Baronius is forced to say,‡ "these things were done by intruders and usurpers of the apostolic throne; which lawful Popes have detested."

In the next age the words of Platina deserve to be observed. "The Papacy," saith he, "was come to that, that he who exceeded, not in piety and learning, but in bribes and ambition, obtained that dignity, good men being oppressed and rejected; which custom would to God our age had not sometimes retained."§ In later ages the simony of Alexander, in procuring the Popedom, partly by ready money, partly by large promises,

* Intrusus ab intruso.

† Contra intestinam discordiam Romanæ Ecclesiæ, sc. de ordinationibus, exordinat. et superordinat. Romanorum Pontificum, et ordinatum ab eis exordinationibus et superordinat. Sigebert, de Script. Eccl. cap. 112.

‡ Hæc perpetrata ab intrusis et usurpantibus thronum Apostolicum, quæ legitimi Pontifices sunt execrati. Bar. ad an. 908.

§ Eo tum Pontificatus devenerat, ut qui plus largitione et ambitione, non dico sanctitate vitæ et doctrina, valeret, tantum dignitatis gradum bonis oppressis et rejectis obtineret: quem morem utinam aliquando non retinuissent nostra tempora. Plat. in vita Sylvestri III.

is at length related by Onuphrius, and Volaterran, but especially by Guicciardine. And Varillas tells us,* that Octavian Fregosius, Duke of Genoa, procured the election of Leo X. by the solicitation of his emissaries among the Cardinals, and by detaining prisoners in the mean while the Cardinals of the opposite party, who hastening to Italy by sea, touched at Genoa in their voyage. There would be no end, if I should produce all the examples which history suggests. And if the known instances be so many, what may we think of the secret acts of simony? For this is a crime, whose chief art consists in keeping it secret, and hiding it from the eyes of men. However, what we have alleged, proves this may sometimes happen; and consequently that we can never be certain the same hath not happened, even when it doth not appear. And from all which hath been said, appeareth the impossibility of certainly knowing, whether he which possesseth the Papal throne at any time be a lawful Pope; and such, whose decrees may be securely believed and obeyed.

Our adversaries are here brought into great straits. Duval confesseth,† it is a great difficulty, and what hath excited no small stirs in some universities. To solve this, they take different ways. Some deny it can ever happen, that an unlawful Pope should possess the chair; and that it is of faith to believe every particular Pope lawful. So Suarez, Valentia, Arriaga, Raynaudus, Caspensis, Martinonus, Rhodius, and others cited by them; and with reason. For if this be not of faith, no faith can be founded on their decrees, as they invincibly argue. But on the other side, how can that be of faith, which so many examples prove to be false? Or on what foundation shall this divine faith be placed? Suarez and Martinonus answer, upon the reception of the Church; and it is worth observing how they confirm that. “Because if it should be once granted,” saith Suarez, “that an error of this nature can happen in the universal Church, it can be no ways true, that she hath a certain and infallible living rule of faith speaking to her in Christ’s name.”‡ The same saith Martinonus.§ Both add, that this

* Varil. Hist. Franc. 1. liv. 1.

† Duval de Potest. Pont. par. 2. sect. 5.

‡ Si talis posset semel dari error in universali Ecclesia; nunquam esset verum illam habere certam et infallibilem regulam vivam fidei sibi loquentem Christi nomine. Suar. de Fide, Disp. 10. sect. 5.

§ Mart. de Fide, Disp. 5. sect. 6. Nam is error æquiparatur errori in fide—multo intolerabilius esset errare in viva fidei regula. Idem. ibid.

error would be equal to an error in faith : “ for,” say they, “ if it be an intolerable error in the Church, when the whole Church believeth a book to be canonical, which is not ; although that be but a dead rule of faith, it would be much more intolerable to err about the living rule of faith.” That they reason soundly, cannot be denied. For it is no less repugnant to absolute infallibility to err about the living, than about the dead rule. But this being admitted, I shall much more easily prove the Church can err about the dead rule, than Suarez, that it cannot err about the living. That it cannot err about the dead rule our adversaries can never prove : that it can about the living I will demonstrate. If ever any Pope was unlawful and irregular, surely Vigilius was. Yet he was owned and esteemed as lawful Pope by the fifth General Council, and by the whole world : although he were banished, imprisoned, and publicly vilified by the Emperor for refusing to condemn the *Tria Capitula*, and was afterwards excommunicated by the Western bishops for doing it ; yet was he never denied to be true and lawful Pope. So in the ninth and tenth ages, those monstrous Popes were, by Baronius’s confession,* “ so honoured and revered by all the faithful, that whomsoever they heard did preside in the Church of Rome, although indeed but a nominal Pope, never inquiring into the lawfulness of his election, they respected no otherwise than St. Peter himself.” In a word, all those whom I mentioned before, were generally obeyed by the Church. The Church therefore can err in this matter. But see how Suarez and the rest, by pretending the contrary, have destroyed their own darling opinion. For if it be of faith, that a Pope acknowledged by the whole Church, is a lawful one, then Stephen, Romanus, and Sergius, who condemned Formosus, and annulled his acts as not being lawful Pope, erred ; and so farewell all Papal infallibility. For they erred in the faith, if it be of faith that Formosus was lawful Pope, as it must be according to these Divines ; since Formosus, while he lived, was acknowledged and obeyed by the universal Church ; whereas these three Popes his successors defined, that he was no lawful Pope.

Duval perhaps was aware of these inconveniences, and there-

* At, quod mirandum est, isti (Pontifices) licet tales fuerint, tamen eo honore et reverentia fideles omnes prosequerantur Romanam Eccl. ut quemcunque in ea sedentem audirent nomine tenus Pontificem, eundem, mirum dictu ! nulla habita discussione ejus ingressus, eum ut Petrum colerent. Bar. ad an. 897.

fore took another method. He maintains it matters nothing, whether he which possesseth the popedom be true Pope or no; and that his decrees will not be at all the less infallible. "We affirm," saith he, "that such a Pope esteemed for true, can never err. For God, lest falsehood be obtruded upon his Church for truth, will never permit him to err, and that according to the common and ordinary law; because the Pope is not for himself, but for the Church."* But there is nothing solid in all this. For first his reason is vain. For if the Pope be not for himself, but for the Church; no more are any other governors of the Church. Shall therefore whatsoever they do be valid, although they be neither baptized nor ordained? To think so, Suarez calls heresy, nor will Duval allow it. Yet allow it he must, or else part with his argument. Secondly, this is directly contrary to Julius II.'s decree. For Duval would have a simoniac or irregular Pope to be obeyed and heard. Julius commands him to be looked upon as an heresiarch and magician, to be disobeyed, deprived, and driven out of his see. Thirdly, if we consult Scripture, that forbids us to hearken to these invaders of Church offices. For our Saviour, after he had said that those which enter into the sheepfold any other way than by the door, are thieves and robbers; adds, "And a stranger will they" (the sheep) "not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."† And in another place, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."‡ Now simoniacs and usurpers of ecclesiastical offices are these thieves and robbers, and ravening wolves.

Now as for reason, that can never teach us that we owe the same reverence to unlawful, as to lawful Popes. For contrarily in the civil government every man is bound even to disobey a tyrant and usurper, who drives out the lawful prince. Besides, since infallibility is by our adversaries annexed to the popedom as an inseparable privilege, he that is no Pope can have no right nor claim to it. So saith also Martinonus expressly,§ "This power and assistance is given to none but a true Pope, to whom

* *Dicimus talem Pontificem pro vero creditum nunquam erraturum—ne in Ecclesiam falsum pro vero obtrudatur, nunquam eum Deus errare sinet, et quidem secundum legem communem et ordinariam.* Duval. de Potest. Pont. par. 2. quæst. 5.

† John x. 5.

‡ Matth. vii. 15.

§ *Hujusmodi potestas et assistentia non datur Pontifici nisi vero, cui soli est promissa in Petro.* Mart. de Fide, disp. 9. sect. 6.

only it was promised in Peter.” And it seems indeed incredible to me, that any wicked man should extort that from God by his crimes, which he had annexed to a lawful succession. As if by wickedness he could obtain a right to the perpetual assistance of the Holy Ghost; which had he been innocent, he had for ever wanted. Certainly the ancient Popes thought far otherwise. They never dreamed of purchasing the Holy Ghost by simony, but rather imagined that would obstruct his favour. So Innocent I. speaking of simoniacs, saith, “They have lost that perfection of the Holy Ghost, which they had received. Neither can they give the fulness of it, which exerts itself chiefly in ordinations, having forfeited it by the perfidiousness of their impiety.”* Gregory I. “They which in the temple of God presume to sell doves (by which, as in the words immediately precedent appears, he means simoniacs) their bishoprics by the judgment of God are become void, which error is propagated with increase in those who are subject to them. For whom any one ordains for money, by ordaining he makes him an heretic.”† Which words he repeats more than ten times in his other epistles. John VIII.‡ hath used the same expressions in one of his epistles. And Peter Damian tells us this was confirmed by a miracle. For a simoniacal bishop could never pronounce the name of the Holy Ghost; on which he makes this remark, “For he deservedly lost the Holy Ghost while he bought him.”§

But to return to our argument: what more incredible, than that an atheist, infidel, and profane person should be infallible? Who would not wonder at a Pope pronouncing and deriding oracles at the same time? Infallible and ignorant of his infallibility? Teaching with certainty what himself thinks to be false? Surely if things be so, an irregular and usurping Pope ought not in prudence to be deposed: since his infallibility, as well as that of any lawful Pope, will serve to direct the faithful, and confound heretics; and his deposition cannot be attempted

* *Perfectionem Spiritus quam acceperant, amiserunt. Nec dare ejus plenitudinem possunt, quæ maxime in ordinationibus operatur, quam per impietatis suæ perfidiam perdidierunt. Innoc. 1. Epist. 18. cap. 13.*

† *Quia qui in templo Dei columbas vendere præsumperunt, eorum Deo judice cathedræ ceciderunt: qui videlicet error in subditis cum augmento propagatur.—quia eum quem quis cum pretio ordinat, provehendo agit ut hæreticus fiat. Greg. I. lib. 4. Epist. 50.*

‡ *Joann. VIII. Epist. 94.*

§ *Merito siquidem Spiritum S. dum emit, amisit. P. Dam. Opusc. 19. cap. 6.*

without danger of schism. Lastly, I would know whether when an unlawful possesseth the throne of a lawful Pope, infallibility belong to both, or only to the first. If to both, then in vain doth God dispense so great a gift to the injured Pope, whom nobody acknowledgeth as such. If only to the first, then the privileges of an intruder will be more and greater, than those of a lawful Pope; and usurpation will confer what canonical election cannot. To these add the arguments, which Suarez produceth against this answer:* as, “that it incurreth the same difficulties it is brought to solve. For it is not more certain that a reputed Pope hath the privilege of infallibility, than that he is a lawful Pope: since both depend upon the common belief of the Church, and neither is revealed. Again, if he be only a nominal Pope, he may be also a nominal priest, and so cannot give absolution, hath therefore no right to all the privileges granted by Christ to St. Peter, because no share in the power delegated to St. Peter in those words, ‘Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth,’ &c. Farther, that answer is contradictory in assigning to the reputed Pope an inseparable property of the Papacy (infallibility), and yet denying him to be Pope, that is, truly so.”

It is manifest, therefore, that this answer is plainly false: but let it be true. What still if it shall be uncertain? It will be in the end the same thing; and we shall as easily obtain our design. For if I may doubt whether he be lawful Pope that possesseth the chair, and also whether an unlawful Pope enjoyeth the privilege of infallibility; I may then justly doubt, whether I ought to assent to the decree of every single Pope, and can never be certain of it. That the first is uncertain I have already shewed. That the latter is not certain, our adversaries will not deny. For if any, it must be the certainty of faith, which Duval will never grant, who denies even the infallibility of a lawful Pope to be of faith. If any one yet shall dissent from Duval, and contend that it is of faith, he may be convinced by the same arguments, which we produced against the rest. He may be asked where God revealed it, or the Church defined it. He may be told that defenders of the contrary opinion were never yet accused or condemned of heresy. Lastly, he may be put in mind of Stephen, Romanus, and Sergius, who declaring Formosus to have been an unlawful Pope, did also annul his decrees. But I need not insist upon

* Suar. de Fide, disp. 10. sect. 6.

refuting that, which no man maintains. So that we may conclude there is no certainty to be had in this matter, and therefore that faith cannot safely rely on the Pope's sentence.

CHAP. X.

Wherein is prevented an evasion, whereby Duval endeavours to elude whatsoever hath been hitherto said concerning the Pope.

DUVAL, oppressed with so many difficulties, takes refuge in saying, "The definitions of the Pope are not of faith, before the Church, whose infallibility is of faith, hath received them."* I might justly rest here, since Duval hereby grants us all we desire, *viz.* that faith cannot be founded upon the definition of the Pope alone. Whether the Church's authority adds certainty to it, I shall inquire hereafter. In the meanwhile that the truth may be on all sides more manifest, and because many things now occur not proper for another place; I will more accurately consider Duval's argument. And first, Duval hereby is not consonant to himself. For if the Pope's decrees be not of faith, till received by the Church, then the Pope alone is not a rule of faith, but an aggregate of Pope and Church together; whereas Duval in another place† teaches there are five rules of faith, the Church, Scripture, Tradition, Council, and Pope; whereof every one is so independent and sufficient, that whatsoever it shall propose is most firmly to be believed: not to say that hereby the perfections of a rule of faith will appear much more eminently in the Church than in the Pope, since the Church can direct our faith without the Pope, but not the Pope without the Church; whereas Duval‡ teaches the quite contrary. Herein therefore he is neither consonant to himself, nor to the other patrons of Papal infallibility, while he denies obedience to be due to the Pope's decrees, till they be received and confirmed by the Church; this being very near the opinion of the Sorbonists, those great enemies of the Pope's infallibility. For the Faculty of Divinity

* Respondeo definitiones Pontificis non esse de fide, donec universalis Ecclesia, quam de fide est errare non posse, eas acceptaverit. Duval. de Potest. Pont. part. 2. quæst. 5.

† Id. in 22. p. 62.

‡ Ibid. p. 215.

proposed their opinion in the year 1663, in these words, "It is not the judgment of this faculty, that the Pope is infallible without the consent of the Church."* And the clergy of France, in the year 1682, determined, "That questions of faith chiefly pertained to the Pope, and that his decrees concerned all Churches; yet that his sentence was not irreformable, unless the consent of the Church had supervened."† How little doth Duval's opinion differ from this? who maintains that the Pope's sentence is indeed infallible before the reception of the Church, but appears not so to be till then. For if so, whether fallible or infallible, it signifies not; in matter of practice it will be the same, and assent will be equally denied to the Pope's decrees, until they shall have been admitted by the Church.

In the next place this answer accuseth of rashness and imprudence the far greater part of the Church of Rome; which without the expecting the approbation of the universal Church, blindly receives the Papal decrees, howsoever yet uncertain. But that is of less moment. This I would gladly know, whether the Church, whose reception makes the Papal decrees to become of faith, ought to receive them without any precedent examination, or not till she hath accurately compared them with the word of God. If the latter, then we have no definition, on which faith can rely. For I dare confidently affirm, there is none, which the Church hath thus examined and approved. Few undergo that labour; most blindly follow the dictates of the Pope. Not to say that this is entirely repugnant to that profound submission, wherewith the decrees of the head of the Church ought to be received; or that according to this principle the Pope ought, together with his decree, to transmit to several bishops the reasons of it, since without the knowledge of these they cannot be duly examined; or that the Pope is highly unjust, who without being first certified of their universal approbation, excommunicates and punisheth the contemners of them: I will only urge, that by this means the supreme power is translated from the Pope to the Church, as which passeth the last and peremptory sentence, not only on things to be believed, but even on the decrees of

* *Facultatis dogma non est quod summus Pontifex nullo accedente Ecclesiæ consensu sit infallibilis.*

† *In questionibus fidei præcipuas Summi Pontificis esse partes, ejusque Decreta ad singulas Ecclesias pertinere; nec tamen irreformabile esse judicium, nisi Ecclesiæ consensus accesserit.*

the Popes themselves. How this will agree with the doctrine of our present adversaries, let them see to it. Certainly Raynaudus, and the author* of the treatise of the Liberties of the Gallican Church think far otherwise; of whom the latter bestows a whole chapter to prove this very proposition, that the Papal decrees are not therefore to be obeyed, because confirmed by the Church's consent; but therefore consented to by the Church, because antecedently infallible.

But if the Pope's decrees are to be received by the Church with a blind assent, and without any previous examination, I do not see of what weight such a reception can be; which according to this supposal must be granted to false decrees, as well as true. Besides, such reception would not differ from divine faith, such as is given to the most authentic revelations; and so this opinion would be repugnant to itself. For it supposeth faith is not to be yielded to the papal decrees antecedently to the Church's reception; and yet requires the Church to receive them with a blind assent, that is, with faith.

Theophilus Raynaudus useth a not unlike argument in disputing against this answer of Duval, which is now before us. "The definitions of the Pope," saith he, "in matters of faith,† are received by the people either as to be believed with divine faith, and so antecedently to the reception of the Church; or not upon their own account, but for the sake of the Church's reception. But this is very absurd; because it is not in the power of the multitude or the faithful to make that be of faith by their reception, which was not really such before. For then many things would become of faith, which are by no means such; as the assumption of the blessed Virgin, which no Christian doubts of, and yet none believe to be of faith." He might have added other examples; which we shall produce hereafter.

It may yet be asked, whether this approbation of the Church required by Duval, ought to be express, that is, whether the Pope's decrees ought to be positively received by all, before they become infallible; for if so, there are few or no decrees which have been thus received, certainly none, whose

* De lib. Eccles. Gall. lib. 7. cap. 17.

† At hoc perabsurdum est, quia non est in potestate plebis fidelium facere, ut quod non est de fide sit revera tale. Raynaud. *αὐτὸς ἔφα*, punct. 5.

reception of this kind is or can be manifestly known; or whether a negative reception will suffice, and so those decrees become certain, which are opposed by none. But neither can this be certainly known, until we be assured that the decree is taken notice of by all the faithful. Whereas how many papal decrees are there, which are unknown to the greatest part of Christendom? And no wonder; since St. Augustine himself was ignorant of that Nicene canon, which forbade him to be associated in the bishopric to Valerius yet alive. But that which is chiefly to be herein regarded, is, that the certainty of this sufficiency of the negative reception of the Church can never be demonstrated, and without that we are still at a loss.

This consideration also is of no small moment: that if it be lawful to deny credit and obedience to the Pope's decrees, before it shall be known they have been received by the universal Church; hereby a wide gate is opened to schisms and dissensions. For then every contentious or capricious person may condemn and hinder the execution of the most just decrees; and so put an end to the authority of this so much boasted monarchy. For suppose the Pope publisheth a decree. Some admit, others reject it. Hitherto, according to Duval, it is not of faith, because not yet received by the universal Church. What shall be done in this case? Must a Council be called? That Duval* himself acknowledgeth to be highly inconvenient, sometimes impossible, and for the most part unsuccessful: that "if God had left only that remedy for daily emergent doubts, he would in a manner have obliged his Church to impossibilities: since the calling and meeting of a Council depends upon the pleasure of secular princes; who for reasons of state may prevent it, although the Pope, and with him all the bishops in the world desire it." But even if they meet, it is possible they may dissent in their opinions. If you say that part must be adhered to which the Pope favours; I ask how it is to be adhered to; whether with divine faith? for of that only we now dispute. This Duval, I suppose, will not affirm. For if the infallibility of the Pope alone be not of faith, part of a Council adhering to him will not make his yet uncertain decrees to become of faith; since, according to Duval,

* *Pessime Deus Ecclesiæ suæ consulisset, si viam hanc, quæ raro fœliciter definit, tanquam expeditius malorum indies emergentium remedium reliquisset; quinimo Ecclesiam ad impossibile quodammodo obligasset.* Duval. de Pot. Pont. part 4. quæst. 1.

nothing but the reception of the universal Church can do it ; whereas in this case the approbation even of the whole representative Church is wanting.

CHAP. XI.

That neither can the Faith of Papists rely on the Decrees of Pope and Council consenting together.

First, Because their Infallibility is not sufficiently certain.

THUS have we dispatched the three first foundations of a Papist's faith. The fourth succeeds, viz. an Œcumenical Council ; which may be considered two ways, either as disjoined from the Pope, and destitute of his consent ; or as confirmed by it. The Sorbonists hold the infallibility of it in the first way considered, the monarchical divines only the second. But that I need not dispute separately against the Sorbonists, appears for two reasons : first, because their opinion is easily confuted. For we need oppose to them no more than this, that the infallibility of such a Council is not certain, at least it is not of faith, as we before demonstrated it ought to be. For the Sorbonists can never prove this to be revealed by God. Scripture saith nothing at all of Councils, especially œcumenical. They flee indeed to tradition. But they cannot produce any testimonies of the Fathers, that say this is of faith ; not any evident decrees of Councils ; not the consent of the universal Church, for the greatest part of the Roman Church thinks otherwise. Besides, the opposition it hath met with among many divines of the Church undeniably proves it not to be of faith. For if the dissent of a few Sorbonists can cause the infallibility of the Pope not to be of faith ; certainly the opposition of a far greater number of monarchical divines will produce the same effect, as to the infallibility of a Council without the Pope. Secondly, because it may be confuted with the same arguments, wherewith I shall prove that the definitions of Pope and Council consenting together are no firm foundation for our faith. For if both together suffice not, a Council without the Pope will never be sufficient : since the consent of the Pope may possibly add some firmness to the decrees of a Council, but most certainly can take none from them.

To supersede therefore any further dispute of that matter, let us inquire whether the faith of our adversaries can rely on the decrees of Pope and Council conspiring together. This many of them imagine. Bellarmine,* and Duval,† glory there is no doubt of it among them; that it is unanimously taught by their divines, and therefore is of faith. But I deny both. For although the monarchical divines are of this opinion, yet the Sorbonists dissent: who maintain indeed the infallibility of a General Council, whether agreeing or disagreeing with the Pope, but allow not this prerogative to every Council, but only to a Council truly œcumenical, lawfully constituted, canonically proceeding, and wholly free. The monarchical divines acknowledge the necessity of those conditions, yet differ from the Sorbonists two several ways. First, In that they interpret these conditions differently; as we shall see hereafter. Secondly, In that, whether these conditions be present, they would have judged from the subsequent confirmation of the Pope; which the Sorbonists will by no means allow, but require the knowledge of it to be had some other way. Hence many Councils which the Pope hath pronounced to be both lawful and œcumenical, the Sorbonists will not acknowledge either for lawful or œcumenical; as that of Lyons under Innocent IV., that of Florence and the Lateran under Leo X.; others which the Sorbonists admit, and the monarchists reject, as those of Pisa, Constance (at least as to the first sessions), and Basil. So Bellarmine rejecting some ancient Councils, as those of Sirmium, Ariminum, Milan, and the second of Ephesus, on pretence that they were not approved by the Pope, is said by Richerius‡ to trifle in assigning for the cause that which is not such: since, as he affirms, these Councils were not rejected because not approved by the Pope, but because wanting the requisite liberty. Not to say, that the Sorbonists reject some Councils, merely because the Pope was present, oppressing and overawing their liberty. It is manifest therefore that the consent of our adversaries about the infallibility of Councils confirmed by the Pope, consists only in words, and is not real; and that by a General Council the Sorbonists understand one thing, the monarchists another. The thing itself therefore cannot be of faith; since by the

* Bell. de Concil. lib. 2. cap. 2. [p. 33. vol. 2. Prag. 1721.]

† Duval. de Pot. Pont. part. 2. quæst. 6.

‡ Richer. Apol. pro Gers. axiom. 22.

received doctrine of that Church nothing can be so, but what is unanimously acknowledged and taught by Catholic divines.

But to make the whole matter more evident, I will demonstrate two things. First, That this appears not to be of faith from other arguments besides the dissent of the Sorbonists and monarchists. Secondly, that although it were certain in general there are some infallible Councils, yet it can never be known that any particular Council is so. This was demonstrated above, although under other terms, when we proved that the active infallibility of the Church is not of faith; and what I just now produced, confirms it not a little. To which may be added, that the infallibility of Pope and Council together cannot be of faith, because the infallibility of neither separately is so. For I would ask, why that alone should be of faith; whether because that only is true, or that alone revealed, or that only known to be revealed. Not the first; for then the whole Latin Church would have erred. For there is not, at least not known to be, any, who do not attribute infallibility either to the Pope alone, or a Council alone. Not the second; for then the same inconvenience would follow, since there are none but what hold the infallibility of one of the two to have been revealed? Not the third; for who can ever imagine, that God would give infallibility to Pope or Council, and yet not reveal it so clearly, as that it might be believed with divine faith. For he can have given it for no other end, than that it might be to Christians the rule of believing, which it cannot be, as we before proved, unless it be itself of faith.

To this may perhaps be opposed, that the infallibility of Pope or Council separately wants not divine revelation, but only the definition of the Church proposing it. But if so, then the so much boasted of wisdom and assistance of the Holy Ghost must be wanting in the Church, which would not make this revelation by her definition to be of faith, and thereby hath left to the faithful no other living rule of faith than the Pope and Council consenting together, which for the known difficulties of calling General Councils cannot be perhaps had and applied once in an age; whereas the infallibility of the Pope, if defined to be of faith, would be an apt and easy rule, ready to be consulted upon all occasions. But in truth this infallibility of Pope and Council united is nowhere expressly revealed by God, or openly defined by the Church, for many places of Scripture, and decrees of Councils are indeed alleged for the infallibility of each separately, but not one for

that of both conjunctly. None certainly will deny this; if the opinion of Albertus Pighius, and Fr. à Victoria be true: of whom the first, by the confession of Bellarmine,* thought the institution of Councils plainly human, and found out by natural reasons: the second,† hath these words, “A whole Council can do nothing, which each bishop might not by his own power do of himself; whence this power is not in the Council immediately by divine right, but by the will of the bishops.” That this opinion is at least probable, must be confessed. For no mention of General Councils is to be found in Scripture, none in the ecclesiastical writers of the three first ages, to whom they were wholly unknown. If this opinion should be true, then so much infallibility would vanish into smoke. For who could assure us, that God hath annexed so great a privilege to a human institution? at least it could never be of faith, because wanting divine revelation. I know this opinion is rejected by Bellarmine, but so softly, that he doth not explode it as absurd and intolerable, nor say the contrary is of faith, but only more probable. From whence I argue, that if the divine institution of Councils be only more probable, then their human institution is probable: at least neither opinion exceedeth probability, and so neither can be of faith.

CHAP. XII.

That there were never any Councils Œcumenical.

THUS have we proved the existence of infallible Councils to be uncertain. But grant it certain and undoubted. This will be yet to be inquired, what those Councils are; without the knowledge of which the certainty of the former will be wholly vain. Yet is this thing impossible to be known. For let us survey the conditions which our adversaries require. The first is, that the Council be truly œcumenical. This indeed is not much insisted upon by the monarchists, who maintain

* Bell. de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 3. [p. 2. vol. 2. ut supra.]

† Nihil aliud posset totum Concilium, quod non possent Patres perse singuli secundum suam potestatem: unde hæc potestas non est in Concilio immediate jure divino, sed ex voluntate Prælatorum. Vict. Relect. 2. de Potest. Eccl. sect. 1.

any Council great or small, confirmed by the Pope, to be infallible: and so make no difference between particular and general Councils. For according to their opinion, without the approbation of the Pope both are alike fallible; with it, both alike infallible. Whence Gr. à Valentia* proposeth his judgment in these two assertions: I. "No Council hath of itself infallible authority of defining, laying aside the authority of the Pope." II. "The confirmation of the Pope being added, any Council is infallible:" not so the Sorbonists, they require the Council be truly œcumenical. "The Sorbon," saith Richerius,† "ascribes infallible authority of defining only to the Church, and a general, not particular Council." So Holden:‡ "Such a Council ought in the first place to be truly general." This, therefore, is first to be inquired, whether any Council obtruded on us for a rule of faith, be general. Now I assert two things: I. "That there were never yet any such." II. "That even if there had been, it would be yet uncertain which were such." The first I will prove in this, the second in the following chapter.

That a Council be truly œcumenical, one of these things may be thought necessary; either that all the bishops of the world be present, or at least those who may sufficiently represent the absent. For who can otherwise imagine, that a few bishops should authoritatively impose laws upon the greater number, not inferior in piety and learning, at least not necessarily inferior. Certainly by the consent of all, one equal hath no authority over another; and a few meeting together, do not by their conjunction obtain a right to prescribe laws to the greater number, although disjoined in place, as a learned man § hath well observed. We must therefore necessarily recur to one of these conditions. Yet although even the first should happen, which cannot be without infinite difficulty, I am not obliged to grant the whole Church to be represented in that assembly. For not to say, that would suppose that blind

* Nullum Concilium infallibilem auctoritatem definiendi per se habet, seclusa Romani Pontificis auctoritate. II. Accedente Rom. Pont. confirmatione Concilium quodvis est infallibile. Val. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. §. 45.

† Schola Parisiensis soli Ecclesiæ, et generali, non particulari, Concilio auctoritatem infallibilem decernendi ascribit. Rich. Apol. pro Gers. ax. 22.

‡ Primo, debet Concilium hujusmodi esse vere generale. Hold. Anal. Fid. lib. 2. cap. 3.

§ Thornd. Orig. Eccles. cap. 22.

obedience which is forbidden by the Scripture ; it may happen that in a diocese the bishop be heretical, and the inferior clergy orthodox. In which case the bishop cannot represent the belief of his Church neither *de facto* nor *de jure*, unless we will say his Church was bound to follow him in his heresy. But I will not insist on this. Suppose such an assembly to represent the whole Church. Yet this cannot be denied, that such an assembly never was, nor any Council in which so much as the twentieth part of the episcopal college were present. And if such a Council were never held formerly, when the whole Christian world was subject to one emperor, it cannot be hoped for in this present state of Christendom divided into so many kingdoms and commonwealths.

Laying aside therefore this, let us consider the second way of holding a General Council. Those who are present in a Council can no otherwise represent absent persons, than if they come in their name, and by their command, which may be two ways. First, if they be expressly and by name delegated ; as if provincial Synods should be held every where before the general, and delegates there chosen for the whole province. Or, secondly, if omitting all this, every bishop absenting himself, should for that very reason be thought tacitly and interpretatively to transfer his vote and authority on those which go to the Council. Richerius and Holden seem to favour the first way, Salmeron the latter. For Richerius* having defined a General Council to be an assembly of the whole clergy collected out of all the particular provinces, tells us this is not to be understood of every single ecclesiastic, but that “the readiest way is to choose some out of every order and kind of ecclesiastics in every province and Christian nation.” Holden† requireth, that “some part or number of bishops may be deputed out of divers kingdoms and provinces, and be present in the Council.” On the contrary, Salmeron‡ saith, “Those who by a lawful hindrance, or the permission

* Promptum et expeditum est ex singulis ordinibus aut generibus Ecclesiasticorum aliquos ex singulis provinciis et nationibus Christianis deligere. Rich. Apol. axiom. 21.

† Ut tot variarum Ecclesiarum in diversis regnis et provinciis sitarum pars aliqua seu numerus Episcoporum deputetur et intersit. Hold. Anal. Fid. lib. 1. cap. 9.

‡ Qui legitime impediti, vel ex permissu sedis Apostolicæ non veniunt, jus suum totum in eos qui convenerunt censentur transtulisse. Salm. tom. 12. tract. 77.

of the Apostolic See, come not (to the Council), are supposed to have transferred their right upon those which meet." Occam, and John Brevicoxa, bishop of Paris, seem to have conjoined both ways; whereof the first* requires in a General Council, "divers persons bearing the authority and places of all the parts of Christendom, unless some would not or could not come. Whence if some provinces would not or could not delegate persons having their authority and votes, the Council would be no less general." The latter† defineth a General Council to be "a congregation, wherein divers persons bearing the proxies of the divers provinces of Christendom, meet canonically to consult of the common good." To which he subjoins Occam's proviso concerning the absence of the delegates of some provinces.

However it be, the first way of holding General Councils is not observed by our adversaries. For immediately upon the summons, every bishop who intends to be present, sets forward without expecting the delegation of their comprovincial bishops. Nay, rather both the historians of the Council of Trent, Father Paul, and Cardinal Palavicini, relate that when the Viceroy of Naples would have had four bishops of that kingdom chosen and sent to the Council in the name of all the rest, the Pope took it very ill, and most severely forbid it to be done. Which I question not to be the reason, why Canus and Bellarmine, in assigning the conditions of a General Council, never mention this. This express and formal delegation, therefore, is not necessary to constitute a General Council, unless they deny the Tridentine and other Councils, in which it was not used, to be General. But neither is it valid, if it were used. For bishops may be delegated either with an absolute and unlimited power of giving their suffrages as they please; or restrained to certain rules of voting on this or that side. The first way, though tolerable in temporal affairs, the success of which is of no great moment, yet is not to be endured in matters of faith and eternal salvation. For suppose the delegates vote heresy, shall the delegators be

* *Diversæ personæ gerentes auctoritatem et vicem universarum partium totius Christianitatis, nisi aliqui noluerint vel non potuerint convenire. Unde si aliquæ provinciæ nollent vel non possent, &c. Occam. Dial. lib. 5. cap. 8.*

† *Congregationem, in qua diversæ personæ gerentes vicem diversarum partium et provinciarum totius Christianitatis ad tractandum de bono communi rite conveniunt. Brev. apud Laun. Epist. part. 8. ad Amel.*

bound to confirm their suffrages? The second way of delegating destroys the liberty of the Council. For the present bishops would by this means be no judges of the controversies proposed, and all disputation or examination of the question in hand would be wholly vain.

The first way therefore of representation is useless. Let us now consider the second. I affirm that the absent bishops cannot be said to have committed their suffrages to the present. For first, although this may with some colour be said of those which have been lawfully and sufficiently summoned; yet it cannot be applied to them, who either are not summoned at all, or not by him who hath the lawful authority to do it. Who this is, is yet undetermined. Besides, what if the absent bishops shall openly protest they will not be obliged by what the others shall decree, as the French did at Trent; shall they be also supposed to have tacitly assented? But to shew the vanity of this pretence more clearly, I will prove that tacit delegation, which in other cases may be allowed, to have here no place. First, it doth not appear what is the peculiar office to be performed by the bishops in a Council. Holden makes them only witnesses of revealed truths: others rather think them to be judges. But judges they cannot be, unless also witnesses. For how shall they define an opinion to have been revealed or not, unless they know it to be so, and be witnesses of the revelation, or at least tradition? Yet it is certain that proxies in witnessing are not wont to be allowed; or if they be, that a tacit delegation will not suffice. I add, if it were a matter of mere external discipline, or what concerns only the bishops themselves; those who absent themselves might perhaps be supposed to quit their right, and submit themselves to the judgment of the rest which meet in the Council. But to imagine such a thing in a matter of faith and truth, is most absurd. Shall those bishops, who might have borne witness to the truth, be thought to have forfeited or deserted their right, only because either voluntarily or by force they were absent from the Council? If this were admitted, error would soon triumph over truth, and heresy over faith. For our adversaries confess, and experience hath often proved, that the major part of bishops in a Council may favour heresy. For suppose the heretical bishops nearer to the place of the Council, or supported by the favour of the secular prince, or mightily zealous in the propagation of their error, all which advantages Arianism formerly enjoyed in the East. If to these be added

the right of representing absent bishops, they may establish heresy in the Church for ever, and oblige the absent bishops for a punishment of their negligence to subscribe to erroneous definitions of faith. Lastly, if the absent bishops tacitly delegate their suffrages to the present; there is no number of bishops so small, which may not constitute a General Council, nay, although they be all of one province (provided the summons were directed to all the provinces), as being interpretatively invested with the authority of all the absent bishops. Which yet is not allowed by our adversaries; and Bellarmine* himself requires, as the fourth condition of a General Council, "that some bishops come from at least the greatest part of the provinces of Christendom." Let the reader now judge, how that can stand, which Richerius† so positively affirms, "that an œcumenical Council represents the whole Church most properly and perfectly." On the contrary, what I have already offered, proves that the Church is not at all, much less most perfectly, represented thereby.

CHAP. XIII.

That although there were Œcumenical Councils, it would be always uncertain which they were.

THAT there is no truly Œcumenical Councils, I have proved in the precedent chapter. But grant there is, we shall gain but little, unless we undoubtedly know, which they are that deserve that name. For the Papists will not have their faith rely upon a Council indefinitely, but upon such or such a Council, as for example, upon that of Constance or Trent. But their faith cannot rely on these, unless they were certain they were œcumenical; which that they can never be, I shall prove in this chapter. I might perhaps supersede this labour, as being already performed by learned men even of the Church of Rome, Launoy,‡ and the author§ of the treatise of the Liberties of the Gallican Church, although with a different intention. For the first seems to have undertaken it only for the

* Ut saltem ex majori parte Christianarum Provinciarum aliqui adveniant. Bell. de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 17.

† Maxime proprie et perfectissime. Rich. Apol. axiom. 21.

‡ Laun. Epist. part. 8. ad Ames. [Colon. Allobrog, 1731.]

§ De Lib. &c. lib. 5. cap. 2.

love of truth; the second that he might shew the necessity of depending wholly and absolutely upon the Pope. But because both of them have omitted many things, it will not be perhaps unuseful to add mine to their observations.

First, therefore, the difficulty of knowing œcumenical Councils appears from the discord of authors in numbering them. Bellarmine reckons thirty-two, which, distributing into four classes, he makes eighteen of them to have been approved, seven condemned, six partly approved and partly condemned, and one (the Pisan) neither manifestly approved, nor manifestly condemned. Bosius* numbers eighteen, expressly denying the rest to have been general. Bannes† fifteen, or at most seventeen. But all omit that of Siena, although acknowledged to have been general by the Council of Basil.‡ Again, of those numbered by Bellarmine, some are by other writers expunged out of the list. Let us view them in order. After the first Nicene Council, of whose universality none doubts, comes that of Sardica, which is thought to be general by Bellarmine, Baronius, Perron, Lupus, Natalis Alex., Maimbourg; denied by the Africans, Photius, and Auxilius,§ among the ancients; by Richerius|| and Peter de Marca¶ among the moderns. The first Constantinopolitan Council Natalis** affirms to have been only a Synod of the Eastern Church, and œcumenical only *ex post facto*, inasmuch as the Western Church in the Roman Synod under Pope Damasus approved it. Yet in the year after the Council, the Eastern bishops meeting at Constantinople, and writing to the Roman Synod, call their former Council œcumenical; which Valesius†† doth not without cause wonder at, and observes the Western Church did not of a long while after esteem it œcumenical.

I find none which deny the first Ephesine Council to have been general. Yet if any one should do it, he would not want some foundation. For in the first session, wherein Nestorius was condemned, not only the whole Oriental diocese, subject

* Bos. de Signis Eccl. lib. 5. cap. 8.

† Ban. Catal. Concil. præmisso, tom. 3. in Thom.

‡ Concil. Basil. in quadam resp. data 3. Id. Maii, 1436.

§ Apud Lupum Diss. de Concil. Sardic.

|| Rich. de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 3. [p. 42. Colon. 1683.]

¶ Marca de Concord. lib. 7. cap. 3.

** Orientalis duntaxat Ecclesiæ Concilium istud fuit, nec œcumenicum nisi ex post facto, quatenus, &c. Nat. §. 4. part. 1. p. 236.

†† Val. Not. ad Theod. Hist. lib. 5. cap. 3.

their delegates. Not to say that the pretended legates of the three Oriental patriarchs were suborned by the Council, and had no commission from those patriarchs. That the Council of Frankfort was called general, Baronius* observes; certainly Hincmar gave it that name. Nor doth Bellarmine oppose, although in another place† he calls the second Nicene Synod more universal. However it could not be general, since all the Greeks (who were not yet divided from the Western Church by schism) were absent. The eighth Synod the Latins call œcumenical; the Greeks deny it, as the English, French, and Germans did also formerly. The Greeks, on the contrary, reckon for the eighth General Council the Synod under Photius, which is rejected by the Latins.

After these Bellarmine reckons eight other Councils elder than that of Constance, *viz.* four of Lateran, two of Lyons, and those of Vien and Pisa. But the Council of Constance‡ admits only one of Lateran, one of Lyons, and that of Vien; rejecting the other five. Clement VII. rejects yet more. For in his bull of privilege for the edition of the Florentine Synod, he calls it the Eighth General Council; whereby he proscribes all these eight, the Council of Constance itself, and the Constantinopolitan under Ignatius, which commonly bears the title of the Eighth: of these eight, that of Lyons under Innocent IV. was one; wherein Frederick the Emperor was deposed. This Bellarmine, Onuphrius, and the assertors of the Pope's deposing power contend to have been general. Launoy and Widdrington deny it. Nor is this a late controversy. This very thing was disputed in the Synod§ itself between the Pope and Thaddeus, the Emperor's orator, who, appealing to a future General Council, was rejected by the Pope upon pretext that the present Synod was œcumenical. The Council of Constance is from the beginning to the end accounted general by the French; as the Cardinal of Lorraine|| expressly affirms, and the whole clergy of France lately confirmed with a solemn decree. The monarchists deny it to have been general in the first session, because of the three obediences but one was present. So Cajetan, Canus, Bellarmine, Duval, and innumerable others.

* Bar. ad ann. 794. [1597.]

† Bell. de Concil. lib. 2. cap. 8.

‡ In formula fidei Pontifici eligendo prescripta.

§ Vid. Labbeanam Concil. editionem.

|| Apud Gallos Constantiense Concilium in partibus suis omnibus ut generale habetur. Comm. ad Briton. Senat.

Bosius* and Father Cotton go farther; of whom the first reckons it not at all among the œcumenical Councils; the second by the testimony of Richerius,† wiped it out of the list of them. That the Council of Basil was always held œcumenical by the French, the Cardinal of Lorraine witnesseth. The same was the opinion of Eugenius IV., Bellarmine, Carranza, Labbé, and others. Duval‡ vehemently opposeth it, and stiffly contends it was never general. The Council of Florence was never by the French esteemed either lawful or general, saith the same cardinal.§ On the contrary, the Italians and Spaniards extol it to the skies. The Council of Lateran under Leo X., Fabulottus, Bellarmine, and many more, contend to have been œcumenical. Yet Bellarmine confesseth that some doubt of it; and Duval,|| that “others affirm it not to have been truly and properly general, forasmuch as there were scarce an hundred bishops present in it.” And himself a little after leaveth it uncertain, because of the paucity of bishops; which reason might also exclude many sessions of the Council of Trent.

Thus therefore it manifestly appears, that there are many Councils whose universality was and is disputed of; the Latins agreeing neither with the Greeks nor among themselves. And if so, what certainty can be founded upon their decrees to which the very first condition of an infallible Council is wanting? To this may be opposed, there are some Councils which none deny to have been œcumenical; as the first Nicene, that of Chalcedon in the first sessions, the sixth, and the Tridentine. I own the consent of our adversaries herein; and omitting many things which might be replied, I will chiefly insist upon this, that this consent of our adversaries is vain and destitute of all foundation, and would presently vanish if they adhered to their own hypotheses. For those conditions which they require to make a Council œcumenical, are not to be found in all these Councils; and besides, are such as create new scruples and perplexities.

First, therefore, Holden teacheth, that to constitute a Gene-

* Bos. de Signis Eccl. lib. 5. cap. 8.

† Rich. Hist. Concil. lib. 2. cap. 3.

‡ Duval. de Potest. Pont. in anteloqu.

§ Conc. Florentinum perinde ac nec legitimum nec generale repudiatur. loc. cit.

|| Quidam aiunt non fuisse vere et proprie generale, cum ei vix C. Episcopi interfuerint. Duval. de Potest. Pont. part. 4. qu. 7.

ral Council, it is necessary "some bishops out of so many divers churches situate in distant kingdoms and provinces, be deputed and be present, as may make the common assembly arise to that degree of universality, as may exclude all suspicion of fraudulent conspiracies and factions, so that no prudent or honest man may doubt it to be œcumenical."* Many things may be here observed; as, first, how many bishops soever be present, we can never be sure there is no faction or conspiracy in the Council, how well disposed, or from how different soever places they come. What hinders but they may be corrupted at the place of Council? The Councils of Milan, Ariminum, and Ephesus are eminent examples of this; yea, and the Council of Trent itself: wherein Father Paul relates, that the Spanish bishops complained there were present more than forty bishops obnoxious to and stipendiaries of the Court of Rome, whereof some received thirty, others sixty crowns a month.† Again, that when it was reported at Rome that the French bishops were on their way to the Council, Pius IV. in a great fright called together the bishops waiting then at Rome, told them how necessary their presence was at the Council, and persuading some with promises, others with gifts, hastily packed them away to Trent. The fear of this made the Councils of Constance and Basil to decree, that the votes should be taken, not singly, but according to the several nations, "it being not reasonable," saith Richerius, "that in things pertaining to faith and discipline, the Italian nation alone should assume and arrogate to themselves more than any other Christian nations."‡

The number of bishops therefore affords no certain remedy against factions. But suppose it doth: is nothing else required to constitute a General Council but freedom from factions? Then many national and provincial synods will become œcumenical. Certainly factions may be wanting in particular Councils, if many bishops be present; and perhaps œcumeni-

* Ut tot variarum Ecclesiarum in diversis regnis sitarum, pars aliqua seu numerus Episcoporum deputetur ac intersit; qui conventum communem ad eum universitatis gradum convenientem assurgere faciat, ut improbarum conjurationum, etc. absit omnis suspicio, etc. Hold. Anal. Fid. lib. 1. cap. 9.

† Hist. Conc. Trid. lib. 6.

‡ Nihil causæ est, cur in rebus ad fidem aut disciplinam Eccles. spectantibus una et sola natio Italica sibi plus assumat et arroget, quam aliæ nationes Christianæ. Rich. Apol. ax. 8.

cal liberty, if but a few. If that liberty contributed any thing, it would be only to enable the bishops to proceed canonically if they would. But that is not the thing we now dispute of. For particular Councils have been often seen to proceed very well, and œcumenical, very ill.

Secondly, Holden neither doth nor can define how many bishops (or out of how many provinces) must necessarily be present, but leaves the matter to common prudence, the judgments of which are infinitely various and uncertain, whence no certainty in this particular, upon which all the rest depend, can be had thence ; especially if we consider that the bishops present in Councils are sometimes more, sometimes fewer. So the Council of Lateran under Innocent III. is said to have had above a thousand prelates, that of Chalcedon six hundred ; the fifth Lateran one hundred ; that of Trent in the first session much fewer. So that prudence can fix no certain rule here, and if she be satisfied when a great number is present, she cannot but hesitate when but a few.

Holden's rule therefore is of no use to the knowledge of œcumenical Councils. Lupus comes somewhat nearer the truth, who requireth the presence of the Pope, all the orthodox patriarchs, primates, metropolitans, and bishops, if not corporally, at least by delegation or express consent, whether previous or subsequent.* The same saith Bosius.† But neither are they in the right. For if this were true, all Councils whose decrees are received by the whole Church, would be œcumenical, and so the Councils of Ancyra, Neocaesarea, Laodicea, Gangra, &c. (whose canons were received both by the Greek and Latin Church, and confirmed by divers Popes and General Councils) would become œcumenical. "This explication," saith the author of the treatise of the Liberties of the Gallican Church,‡ "confounds the idea of a General Council ; and by resolving the whole authority of it into the subsequent acceptation of the universal Church, raiseth national, provincial, and even diocesan synods into the same rank with it." This also would follow, that Councils, how frequent and numerous soever, could not be œcumenical, till they were re-

* Dico adesse oportere sedem Apostolicam, omnes Ecclesiæ Orthodoxos Patriarchas, etc. Lup. Dissert. de Concil. CP. I. p. 306.

† Bos. de Signis Eccl. lib. 5. cap. 8.

‡ Hæc explicatio Concilii ideam confundit. Hæc enim ipsa ratione non solum, etc. lib. 5. cap. 2.

ceived by the universal Church, and so those Councils would have lied, which without expecting this subsequent reception, entitled themselves œcumenical, as almost all did, although many of them were not received of a long while after, as the fifth, seventh, eighth, of which before. Nay, Lupus observeth the canons of the first Council of Constantinople were not received before Innocent III. For more than eight hundred years therefore, according to Lupus, that Council must have been particular; nay both general and particular. For the Creed of it was admitted by both Churches, the canons only by the Greeks.

But laying aside these, let us come to Bellarmine, who hath used more accuracy herein. He lays down four conditions of a General Council. First, "That the summons be general, and notified to all the greater provinces of Christendom: for that this was always observed, and for default of it the Council of Constantinople against images was declared void by the seventh Synod."* But how shall we be assured, that this condition was not wanting to any one Council either ancient or modern, or that certain intelligence was received in every province of the indiction of it? Secondly, "That no bishop be excluded, whencesoever he come, provided he be known to be so, and be not excommunicated."† That this again was always observed we cannot be assured. For not only those are to be esteemed excluded who are openly rejected, but those also, who privily by threats, promises, or any other way are forced to depart; as Paulus Vergerius, bishop of Justinople, by public writing complained he was from the Council of Trent. The third condition is, "That all the patriarchs be present either by themselves or by their legates."‡ But to this Bellarmine adds, "That it is not very necessary, because the Council of Ephesus without the Patriarch of Antioch condemned Nestorius, and the Synod of Chalcedon concluded almost all things without him of Alexandria." And at this time, saith he, "these patriarchs are not necessary, because heretical, or at least schismatical."§ But it doth not follow, that because one patriarch

* Prima est, ut evocatio sit generalis, ita ut innotescat omnibus majoribus Christianis provinciis. Bell. de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 17.

† Ut ex Episcopis nullus excludatur undecunque veniat, modo constet eum esse Episcopum et non excommunicatum. Id. Ibid.

‡ Ut adsint omnes Patriarchæ vel per se vel per legatos. Id. Ibid.

§ Non sunt necessarii, quia hæretici, vel certe schismatici. Id. Ibid.

may be absent, therefore the rest ought not to be present. Besides, Bellarmine herein contradicts himself. For he demonstrateth the necessity of the presence of the patriarchs by this argument among others ; because the second Nicene Council proves that the Council of Constantinople against images was not oecumenical from the absence of the patriarchs. If this argument hold, the presence at least of some patriarchs will be necessary. And whereas he denies the presence of the patriarchs to be now necessary, because heretical or schismatical, this again creates new perplexities. For they deny themselves to be so, and it is at least very uncertain whether they are so ; so that this thing must be first searched out and determined, before a firm assent can be given to the decrees of a Council wanting their presence. See new difficulties, new labyrinths. Lastly, with Canus, Duval, and others, he requires, that if not all bishops be present in the Council, as they cannot all be, at least some out of all the greater provinces meet there. If so, then must be wiped out of the catalogue of General Councils, the second and fifth, in which no Western, some of Lateran, and those of Vien, Constance, and Trent, in which no Eastern bishops were present. Duval opposeth this reason to the Council of Basil, which may with equal reason be returned upon all the rest.* Beside, when neither Bellarmine nor any other dare determine how many bishops out of each province must necessarily be present, or how many provinces may safely be wanting in the Council ; the whole matter cannot but remain uncertain. That also deserves to be observed which Bellarmine admonisheth, that it was always thought sufficient, that when a General Council is held in the East, a few, suppose one or two Western bishops be present ; or a few Eastern bishops in a Council held in the West ; as he proveth by divers examples. But if two or three bishops can sufficiently represent one entire part of the universal Church, why may not as many more represent the other part ? which being admitted, a meeting of four or five bishops will constitute a General Council, which to me seems very absurd and ridiculous.

Hence it appears, therefore, that our adversaries can produce nothing satisfactory in this matter ; which will be yet more manifest, if to what we have observed already be added, that they talk much concerning it, but prove nothing. Whereas

* Duval. anteloq. ad lib. de Potest. Pont.

they should not tell us, what they thought requisite or sufficient to constitute a General Council, but also demonstrate it so to be, and that so clearly, that no doubt might remain. Otherwise we shall be ever uncertain, which are to be called œcumenical Councils, and which not. Yet nothing of this is produced by them. Themselves rather differ about the conditions; and what one thinks sufficient or necessary, another rejects as insufficient or unuseful. So Bellarmine thinks it sufficient that many be present in the Council, and none excluded. Lupus denies this to suffice, unless the absent bishops, either before or after the Council, shall assent. Bellarmine holds this assent unnecessary. For speaking of the Lateran Council under Leo X. he hath these words: "But whereas it was not received, at least by all, it matters little. For the decrees of a Council need not the approbation of the people, since they receive not their authority from them."* Fabulottus† and the author of the treatise of the Liberties of the Gallican Church, maintain, and at large prove the same things.‡ Thus all things are uncertain among them, and hang upon a thread. Martinonius was not ignorant of this: who to proceed more warily, flieth to the Pope and Council itself; and maketh them, especially the Pope, the only judges of these preliminary questions. "To him," saith he, "it belongs to declare, whether the assembly be sufficiently general, and whether those which are present, sufficiently represent all the rest."§ But neither doth this suffice. For as to a Council, since only a General can infallibly pronounce in matters of faith, and the universality of the Council pertains to faith, before we can acquiesce in the determination of the Council concerning its own universality, we must know whether it be general. Otherwise we cannot be assured, that it did not err in that very determination. Besides, if this judgment of the Council itself sufficed, all those were to be admitted as gene-

* Quod autem non fuerit receptum, saltem ab omnibus, parum refert. Nam decreta Conciliorum non indigent approbatione populi, cum ab eo non accipiant autoritatem. Bell. de Concil. lib. 2. cap. 17.

† Fabul. de Potest. Papæ super Concil. cap. 5.

‡ Ubi supra.

§ Pontificis est declarare, an congregatio sit generalis sufficienter, et an qui adsunt teneant locum sufficienter omnium aliorum. Mart. de Fide, Disp. 5. sect. 7.

ral, which challenged that title to themselves. But some of these the monarchists reject, as the Council of Constance before the union of the three obediences, and that of Basil. Others the Sorbonists, as the Florentine and the Lateran under Leo X. The same may be said of the Pope. For every one of these four Councils were decreed to be general by some Pope, yet none of them acknowledged to be so by all.

CHAP. XIV.

That not all Œcumenical Councils are presently lawful; that it is very difficultly known which are lawful.

THUS have we considered the first condition of an infallible Council, *universality*. The second follows of no less moment, that, *if it be lawful*. Our adversaries confess, that the Holy Ghost is not indifferently present in all Councils, how numerous soever. They acknowledge even the most numerous to have defined erroneously. They require them to be rightly and canonically constituted, and every way lawful. Whence as often as we object to them the errors of some Councils, they think it enough to answer, such were pseudo Councils, conventicles of no value, not lawful Councils, to which alone they allow the privilege of infallibility. That the knowledge therefore of the lawfulness of Councils is very difficult, however necessary to give assurance to faith relying on the decrees of them, and that no true certainty is to be had therein, I here undertake to prove. And the difficulty of this knowledge may hence appear; that it is utterly unknown what are the conditions necessary to make a Council lawful. I never yet met with any one who dares undertake to assign them, much less demonstrate them. Some things may be found scattered here and there in treating of other matters, but nothing delivered *ex professo*. Yet unless this knowledge were fixed, these conditions assigned, agreed on, and demonstrated, and their number exactly determined, so as we might be ascertained that neither more were required, nor fewer sufficed; in vain will Councils define, the infallibility of their decrees will be always uncertain.

I doubt not, but if God had intended to tie our faith to the

decrees of Councils, he would either have tied it to all indifferently, or provided that no unlawful Councils should ever be held, or given us plain and manifest rules whereby to distinguish lawful from unlawful ones. For to permit divers unlawful Councils to be held, to command the faithful to adhere only to the lawful ones; and all this while to prescribe no certain conditions, assign no manifest characters of a lawful Council, is highly repugnant to the wisdom and goodness of God. He might indeed justly have left this difficult inquiry to us, if it had been accommodated to our strength and capacity. But the discord of whole Churches in assigning the lawful Councils, and consequently the error of some most learned men, manifestly evince it to exceed both. So formerly adhered to the fifth General Council the whole Eastern and the Roman Churches; Africa, France, Spain, and the rest of Italy, openly and vigorously rejected it. Each of these Churches did then abound with most learned and most holy men; which proveth the thing to have been very doubtful and obscure, and difficult to be determined. The same may be said of the Council of Constance as to the first sessions, Basil, Florence, and the fifth Lateran; whose lawfulness is to this day disputed of.

The difficulty of this matter can arise only from the ignorance of the conditions necessary to make a Council lawful. If these were fixed, the determination would be easy, unless the conditions themselves were intricate and imperceptible. The monarchists, who assert those Councils to be lawful, which are called, presided over, governed, and confirmed by the Pope, all which are easily known, can scarce doubt which are lawful Councils; whence they all agree in numbering them. Not so the rest; who neither agree in assigning the conditions of a lawful Council, nor explain the necessity of each condition, nor demonstrate what they say to be true. For example, the first condition given by the monarchists, is, that the Council be called by the Pope. So also many of the Sorbonists; as Brevicoxa,* who saith, “the Council ought to be called by the Pope, unless he be a notorious heretic;” and Richerius,† who affirms, “the calling of Councils ordinarily and regularly to

* *Debet Concilium autoritate Pontificis congregari, nisi in casu in quo Papa esset notorius hæreticus. Brev. apud Launoi, Epist. part. 8. ad Amelium.*

† *Est Summi Pontificis regulariter et ordinarie generalia Concilia indicare et convocare; ita si rogatus id facere detrectet, &c. Rich. Apol. axiom. 25.*

belong to the Pope, unless he be distracted, or refuse to do it when desired." Launoy, on the contrary, thinks it matters not by whom the Council is called, so it decrees rightly when met. Therefore after a clear passage cited out of Maximus's disputation with Theodosius, bishop of Cæsarea,* he concludes "the authority of Synods not to depend upon the calling of them, whether done by one or other, but upon the truth of their definitions." Nor without reason. For if no Councils were lawful, but what were called by the Pope, then the ancient Christians had no lawful ones; among whom all those famous and holy Councils were called only by the Emperors; as Launoy and others have abundantly demonstrated.

The same may be said of the second condition assigned by the monarchists, the presidency of the Pope in council either by himself or by his legates. Richerius† and Holden‡ do not refuse it; of whom the first teacheth the Pope hath a right to preside over Councils; the latter affirms him to be by divine right head of all Councils. But Launoy in proving that the Pope presided not over the first Councils, sheweth that he thinks not this condition necessary.

The third condition is more difficult; which consists in this, that "the Council be made up of those who have a right to be present, and none others." Who these are is not manifest. For first it is required, whether laics be comprehended in this number? This almost all deny; yet Peter de Monte,§ bishop of Brixia, after he hath produced many places on both sides out of the canon law, thence concludeth this matter to be wonderfully doubtful. Certainly in the Council of Jerusalem, which many hold to have been œcumenical, the first and the pattern of all Councils, laics were present, subscribed the synodical epistle together with the Apostles, and said equally with them, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us."|| But to exclude them, and admit only ecclesiastics; shall all ranks of these be admitted? This the monarchists deny, and

* Igitur non a Synodorum convocatione, quæ ab hoc vel illo fiat, sed a recta fide, quæ in Synodis sancitur, Synodorum autoritas depromenda est. Laun. Epist. part. [lib.] 6. p. 263. [Colon. Allobrog. 1731. p. 300. Pars Secunda, vol. 5.]

† Rich. Apol. ax. 25. et 26.

‡ Hold. Anal. Fid. lib. 2. cap. 3.

§ Ista jura supra pro utraque parte producta reddunt hanc materiam mirabiliter dubiam. Tract. de Monarchia.

|| Acts xv

assert only bishops to have ordinarily the right of a definitive suffrage, and cardinals, abbots, and generals of religious orders by privilege. The same seems to be the opinion of Holden. Contrariwise Gerson,* Lud. Alemannus,† cardinal and president of the Council of Basil, Almain,‡ Richerius,§ and Vigorius,|| vehemently contend that presbyters, at least persons bearing cure of souls, have a right to sit in Councils. This is indeed a great question, upon which depends the validity of all Councils. There were some (as those of Basil, Constance, Pisa, and the Lateran, by the testimony of Alemannus, an eyewitness), in which presbyters had a decisive vote, but far more (even all the rest) from which they were excluded. If they have a right, all these last Councils are unlawful: if not, all the first.

Concerning abbots there arises another doubt. They have sat in Councils now for many ages by privilege. The first who obtained it, as Lupus¶ observeth, was the most wicked Barsumus, who made no small bawling in that Ephesine Latrocinium. But it is inquired, who had power to give them such a privilege. Certainly that Spirit which revealeth truth, and as our Saviour tells us, “bloweth where it listeth,” cannot be obliged by any human grant to confer infallibility on those, to whom he never promised it. The monarchists themselves acknowledge the Pope cannot confer on his legates the privilege of not erring. How then shall either Pope or Council give it to abbots? But if they cannot, then are unlawful all those Councils wherein abbots sat, those especially wherein they exceeded the bishops in number, as the Council of Lateran under Innocent III. in which (by Bellarmine’s** computation) were present 1283 prelates, of which only 473 bishops; and that of Constance, which among 1000 Fathers, had no more than 300 bishops. The same question is moved concerning procurators of bishops. For it is justly doubted, whether bishops can delegate that power of defining matters of faith without danger of error, and transfer it upon others that are no bishops. For if not, all those Councils will be invalid, wherein these procurators were admitted. Now that they cannot, seemeth probable. For to omit that, the monarchists

* Gers. de Potest. Eccl. consid. 12.

† Apud. Æneam Silvium. Hist. Concil. Basil. lib. 1.

‡ De sup. Potest. Eccl.

§ Apol. ax 21. 34.

|| Comm. cap. ult.

¶ Lup. tom. 1. p. 865.

** Bell. de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 5. et 7.

affirm the Pope cannot communicate his infallibility, and that bishops should be able to do more than the Pope, seems incredible; I urge that this procuration is not allowed even in temporal causes. Judges are not permitted to substitute others who may give judgment, and pronounce sentence in their stead. And if this be thought inconvenient in judging the frail and momentary things of life; how much more will it be in defining matters that relate to eternal salvation? Lastly, delegated judges can never subdelegate another: unless the delegant shall expressly grant power of doing it. Let our adversaries therefore either shew where God hath given bishops power to constitute procurators to sit in Councils in their name; or confess it to be uncertain whether those Councils are lawful, in which these procurators sit.

They will plead prescription perhaps for this; and urge that it is not probable a custom received and approved by so many ages, should not be lawful. But they have no right to make use of this argument. For Widdrington,* in replying to that objection of the assertors of the deposing power, that kings and emperors have been deposed by the Church, and therefore may be so; answers out of Sylvester, that it doth no way follow, "it being one thing to do a thing, another to determine that it may be done lawfully." And Richerius† freely reprehends many things observed in the Councils. Lastly, Holden tells us, "that all Synods, even œcumenical, may in some measure err in some matters of ecclesiastical discipline, as most divines hold."‡ If in those, then surely in things which they neither command nor define, but only tolerate.

The presidents of the Council of Trent were very much perplexed with this question, and knew not well what to do in it. Cardinal Pallavicini§ relates how they consulted the Court of Rome and the ablest canonists, and employed learned men, Scipio Lancelottus and Michael Thomasius, to write concerning it. The question proposed was, Whether to procurators were of right due a decisive suffrage in the Synod? This they

* Aliud est facere de facto, aliud determinare quod ita possit fieri de jure. Widd. contra Schulck. pag. 241.

† Apol. ax. 38.

‡ Theologi passim affirmant posse quodammodo errare Synodos omnes, etiam œcumenicas, in legibus ad Eccles. disciplinæ regimen spectantibus. Hold. Anal. Fid. lib. 2. cap. 3.

§ Hist. Concil. Trid. lib. 21. cap. 1.

determined in the negative ; as well because it was not a matter of contract or private business, in which these procurators were employed, but the common concern of the whole Church ; as because they bore not that office in the Church, to which God had promised the assistance of the Holy Ghost in œcumenical Synods. But because the custom of the Church was contrary, and some show of arguments appeared on the other side ; the legates thought not fit to determine this question themselves, but expected to know the pleasure of the Court of Rome.

Thus much for the third condition. Gelasius assigns many together, while treating of the difference of lawful and unlawful Synods, he defineth a lawful Synod to be that “ which acteth according to the Scriptures, tradition of the Fathers, ecclesiastical rules, and in defence of catholic faith and communion ; that to be unlawful which acteth contrary.”* I inquire not now, whether all these conditions be necessary. I only say that it will be very difficult this way to distinguish lawful from unlawful Synods. For how few can compare the decrees of them with Scripture, Fathers, and ecclesiastical rules ? Maximus requireth much fewer things. For he would have nothing else required, but only whether the Council decreed rightly. For to Theodosius, bishop of Cæsarea, objecting, that the Lateran Synod held at Rome under Pope Martin, was not received, because not held by the Emperor’s command, he thus replieth : “ If the commands of the Emperors, and not their holy faith, makes Synods valid, then must you receive the Synods held by the command of Princes against the doctrine of consubstantiality, as those of Tyre, Antioch, Seleucia, &c. For all they were called by the Emperors, but all condemned by reason of the impiety of the heretical doctrines confirmed in them. For the pious rule of the Church acknowledgeth only those for holy and lawful Synods, which the truth of their decrees hath approved.”† To which Theodosius

* Secundum Scripturas, sec. traditionem Patrum, sec. Ecclesiasticas regulas, pro fide Catholica et communione. Gel. ad Episc. Dard. Epist. 13.

† Si Synodos quæ factæ sunt jussiones Imperatorum firmant, et non sua fides, recipe Synodos, quæ contra homœousion factæ sunt, &c. Omnes enim has Imperatorum jussio aggregavit. Attamen omnes damnatæ sunt propter impietatem infidelium dogmatum ab eis confirmatorum—illas novit sanctas et probabiles Synodos pius Ecclesiæ Canon, quas rectitudo dogmatum approbavit—Et dixit Theodosius, Ita est ut asseris ; dogmatum quippe rectitudo Synodos roborat. Disp. Maximi cum Theod. inter Anastasii Collectanea a Sirmondo edita Paris. 1620. p. 161, 162.

rejoined : “ So it is as you affirm ; for the truth of their doctrines makes Synods valid.” So they, and with them Launoy above cited. Which if it be admitted, the controversy is at an end. None of us will deny those Councils are to be assented to which have decreed rightly. But how shall we know, whether they have decreed rightly ? Here lieth the difficulty, our adversaries, especially being judges, who are averse to all discussion, and affirm it to be above the capacity of the people. Which way soever therefore they turn themselves, they cannot deny it to be very difficultly known which are lawful Councils, and consequently which, although confirmed by the Pope, can afford certainty and firmness to our faith.

CHAP. XV.

That it is uncertain whether any Councils have been free.

FREEDOM is so necessary to the being of an infallible Council, that all assign it as a condition, none omit it : and herein those two great antagonists Edmund Richerius and Andrew Duval agree ; of which the first makes this his twenty-second axiom :* “ That the liberty of voting is an essential condition wholly necessary to the celebration of Synods, and so necessary, that without it the Holy Ghost presides not over ecclesiastics met in Council. For the apostle saith,† Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” And an anonymous author‡ of a tract offered to the assembly of the French clergy, saith, that “ most numerous Councils, such as those of Ariminum and the second of Ephesus, for want of this liberty, have been pronounced unlawful.” On the other side,§ Duval, speaking of the Council of Ariminum, saith, “ It wanted the liberty necessary to Councils,” and afterwards of the second Ephesine Council, that although lawfully called, yet proceeded unlawfully, being overawed by violence of Dioscorus, in like manner as the Council of Arimi-

* *Libertatem ferendi suffragii esse conditionem essentialem ad celebrationem Synodorum penitus necessariam, &c.*

† 2 Cor. iii. 17.

‡ *Numerosissima Concilia, qualia fuere, &c. propter hanc libertatis carentiam illegitima sunt pronunciata.*

§ *Caruit libertate Conciliis necessaria. Duval. de Potest. Pont. part. 4. quæst. 6.*

num had been by Constantius. The same saith Melchior Canus.*

The ancients consent hereto. St. Hilary giveth this inscription to the first decree of Ariminum: "This is the catholic definition composed by all the catholic bishops, before that terrified with the secular power, they were joined to the society of heretics."† And St. Athanasius having rejected‡ the decrees of this Council of Ariminum, because extorted by contention and force, and desiring a lawful Council, "Let an ecclesiastical Synod," saith he, "be held far from the palace, where neither the Emperor is at hand, nor his commissioner intrudes himself, nor any judge threatens; but where the sole fear of God and institution of the apostles sufficeth."§ St. Basil|| thought the mere relation of the violence used in the Council of Ariminum enough to invalidate all the acts of it. Lastly, Facundus saith, "Never did any forced Council subscribe to any thing but error, as happened in those of Ariminum and Ephesus."¶

That a lawful Synod, therefore ought to be free, is on all sides confessed. But we are not to imagine that this freedom is taken away only by stripes, imprisonment, and the like. There are other more secret and no less efficacious means to obtain the same end. Among these Canus and Richerius reckon threats; St. Ambrose the favour of princes: when he saith of the Fathers of Ariminum, "That seeking the favour of the Emperor, they lost the favour of God, and desiring to please great men, subjected themselves to a perpetual curse."** Richerius asserts this liberty is hindered "by force, threats, or other

* Can. Loc. Theol. et lib. 5. cap. ult.

† Incipit definitio Catholica habita ab omnibus Catholicis Episcopis, priusquam per terrenam potestatem territi hæreticorum consortio sociarentur. Hil. in fragm.

‡ Κατὰ φιλονεικίαν καὶ βίαν συντιθέντα. Athan. Epist. ad Episc. Afric.

§ Γενέσθω ἐκκλησιαστικὴ σύνοδος μακρὰν τοῦ παλατίου ἐν ᾗ βασιλεὺς οὐ κάτεστιν, οὐ κόμης παραγίνεται, οὐ δικαστὴς ἀπειλεῖ, ἀλλὰ μόνον ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ φόβος ἀρκεῖ καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀποστόλων διάταξις. Id. Epist. ad Solit.

|| Καὶ πάντα ἔχοντας μεθ' ἐαυτῶν τὰ ἐν Ἀριμίνῳ πεπραγμένα, ἐπὶ λύσει τῶν κατ' ἀνάγκην ἐκεῖ γενομένων. Basil. Epist. 52. Ad. Athan.

¶ Nusquam coactum concilium nisi falsitati subscripsit; sicut in Arimmo, &c. Fac. lib. 12. cap. 3.

** Dum Imperatoris gratiam sequuntur, Dei gratiam perdiderunt; qui cum placere potentibus aucupantur, maledicto se perpetuo subdidere. Ambr. in Luc. 6.

factions and plots, by immoderate making of parties, favours, giving of money or any other gifts.”* Cardinal Perron† saith, the desire of pleasing hath often crept in among princes, and spoiled and corrupted the judgment of Synods. Holden requireth, that “all things be maturely discussed in the Synod without any begging of votes, or solicitous making of parties.”‡ Lastly, Estrix having said, that the bishops of the second Ephesine Council were forced by the violence of Dioscorus to subscribe to heresy, hath these words: “But you will say, this they did, compelled by force and terror. True: but those who can be compelled by terror to approve heresy; why may they not be induced to the same by other reasons, or any inordinate desire?”§

From what hath been said, I gather four things: I. That liberty in voting is a condition absolutely necessary to a lawful and infallible Council. II. That this liberty is infringed not only by open force, but also by threats, promises, gifts, soliciting of votes, or any other secret arts. III. That this may not only be, but hath actually been done, and that more than once. IV. That these things are so certain, that they are acknowledged by our adversaries, both Sorbonists and monarchists. But if these be true, as most certainly they are; we can never safely assent to the decrees of a Council, till we be assured that no methods of violence or corruption, either manifest or secret, were used to infringe its liberty. But since none can know this but God alone, it is thence most evident, that we are not only not obliged to a blind assent to the definitions of any Council, but that it would be a most gross folly and manifest danger of error to do it; because none but free Councils are infallible, and no man can possibly know which are free.

Melchior Canus saw this,|| who having produced the example of the second Ephesine Synod adds, that “if a true and lawful Synod can err through fear, then heretics may pretend that all

* Vi aut minis, vel aliis studiis aut fabricis, et prensationibus immoderatis, vel gratia, pecunia aut pretio, vel rebus pecunia æstimabilibus. Rich. Apol. axiom. 22.

† Du Perron Repliq. liv. 1. chap. 28.

‡ Absque suffragiorum ambitu aut sollicita prensatione. Hold. Anal. Fid. lib. 2. cap. 3.

§ Hæc illi, inquires, vi et terrore compulsi. Fateor: sed qui terrore compelli potuerunt ad approbandam hæresin, quidni potuissent delabi eodem aliis rationibus aut cupiditate prava impellente? Estr. Diat. assert. 43.

|| Ita fiet, ut nullius Synodi explorata autoritas habeatur. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5.

the rest were subservient to the lusts of Popes and Emperors : and so the authority of no one Synod will be left certain." Nor indeed is this fear of Canus vain. For long since many both heretics and catholics have complained of the violated liberty of Councils. So Eusebius, Theognis, and Maris, repenting of their having subscribed in the Council of Nice, came to the Emperor, and told him, "We have done wickedly, O Emperor, in that being terrified by you we subscribed to heresy : " as Philostorgius relateth.* So Ibas in his famous Epistle to Maris the Persian complaineth, the Fathers of the first Ephesine Council were corrupted by Cyril's gold. The legates of the Roman see made the like complaint in the Council of Chalcedon, Lucentius† telling the presidents in open Council that the bishops were circumvented, and forced to subscribe to canons, to which they had not assented. In the fifth Synod, Lupus saith that Justinian became a Diocletian,‡ and all the Greek bishops were servants to his inclinations ; and relateth the words of Eustathius the presbyter, who affirms that nothing was therein done without violence, necessity, partiality, and affection. Richerius saith,§ that " from the time of Gregory VII. to the Council of Constance, for 340 years, the Popes were wont arbitrarily to impose laws upon the Church ; and having formed canons and definitions at home, to call Synods, and imperiously to propose them, where none dared so much as to mutter against them : " and in another place tells us, || that Gregory VII. " contrary to the custom used in the Church for more than a thousand years, introduced that order, that all bishops should swear obedience to the see of Rome ; whence," saith he, " the liberty of all subsequent Councils was taken away : but much more by the Pope's arrogating to himself the collation of ecclesiastical dignities and benefices ; so that as long as his government in the Church continueth, it seemeth altogether impossible to have a free Council." Duval¶

* Apud. Nicetam, Thes. lib. 5. cap. 8.

† Concil. Chalced. Act. 16.

‡ In hac Synodo Justinianus Diocletianum induerat ; ejus affectibus serviebant omnes Græcorum Episcopi. Lup. tom. 1. p. 737.

§ Ita ut vix ullus contramussare auderet ; quæ forma Conciliorum habendorum vixit a seculo Gregorii VII. ad tempora Synodi Constantiensis. Rich. Apol. ax. 38.

|| Hist. Concil. lib. 1. cap. 13. Ita ut hoc stante regimine omnino impossibile videatur liberum haberi Concilium.

¶ Duval. Anteloq. ad lib. de Potest. Pont.

evinceth the Council of Basil was not free, from Æneas Sylvius, who relates that the Eugenic party being terrified with threats, all rose up together, and cried out in the Council, "Liberty, liberty is taken away from us. How is it that the Patriarch threatens he will break our heads?" The Greeks returning home protested against the force put upon them in the Council of Florence, and therefore would not stand to the decrees of it. As for the Council of Trent, Richerius assures us,* that the "essential liberty of Councils (which giveth to the bishops full power of proposing what they please) was wholly taken away; while none were permitted to propose any thing but the Pope's legates, upon pretext indeed of avoiding confusion, but really that all occasion of disputing freely concerning the necessity of reforming the Church both in head and members, might be taken away from the Fathers of the Council. And these are the fine arts, wherewith the Court of Rome upholds her absolute monarchy or rather tyranny. That in modern Councils bishops are not judges and legislators, as they ought to be, but only counsellors to the Pope, and cannot freely give their suffrages in the Council; because the infallible power and absolute will of the Pope, must now-a-days be received and observed instead of all synod, deliberation, consent, law, canon, and communion of saints; whereby the Church has become the bondslave of the Pope, as Cajetan† impiously and flatteringly calls her." But the intolerable oppression of liberty and various arts used in the Council of Trent, Father Paul amply relates in his history of that Council. You will say, perhaps, these are false, and calumnies. But how doth this appear? Other historians perhaps deliver contrary accounts. But how shall we be ascertained they tell truth? If the first historians be disbelieved, why may not these also? However it be, possible it is the first relations may be true; and until they be proved false, we can never be certain they are not true, can never esteem those

* *Colore quidem impediendæ confusionis, sed revera ut omnis occasio liberius disputandi de necessitate Ecclesiæ reformandæ in capite et in membris patribus Concilii tolleretur. Et hæ sunt artes eximiæ; quibus curia Romana suam absolutam fulcit Monarchiam, ne dicam tyrannidem. Rich. Apol. ax. 22. et in Epilogo. Si hodie celebrentur Concilia, Episcopi non sunt Judices, etc. Item liberam sententiæ dictionem non habent in Synodis, quoniam potestas infallibilis et voluntas absoluta Papæ pro omni Synodo, deliberatione, consensu, lege, canone, et communione sanctorum coli servarique debet, ex quo etiam, &c.*

† *Apolog. part. 1. cap. 1.*

Councils free, and consequently not infallible. For that the irregularity of a Council is not manifest, sufficeth not to found our faith upon its decrees ; but to that end the perfect regularity of it must be known and evident : which cannot be, while the freedom of it is uncertain.

But this is not all ; Canus and Estrix before truly observed, that herein no more account is to be had of fear, than of any other perturbation of the mind : and that he who can be forced by threats to decree against his conscience, may no less vehemently be shaken and drawn from the truth by hatred, anger, hope, desire, or the like. Certainly the efficacy of these passions is no whit less ; and if the Holy Ghost defends not bishops in Council from the impressions of fear, neither will he from the temptations of other affections. Suppose therefore we be assured no force was used to infringe the liberty of the Council, which we can never be ; yet this will not suffice, unless we be at the same time ascertained that the bishops were corrupted with no passions, led by no affections, and served no interest in giving their suffrages. Till then we must suspend our assent to the decrees of any Council ; as justly doubting, whether that may not have undergone the same unhappiness, which hath attended some former Councils. So Lupus accuseth the Fathers of the first Constantinopolitan Council of envy against the Western bishops, but especially the Church of Rome. Liberatus relates, that Theodorus Ascidas, favourite to the Emperor Justinian, in revenge of the condemnation of his admired Origen, projected the design of the fifth Council, and thereby extorted from the whole world the condemnation of the *Tria Capitula*. Duval, that the Council of Basil was blinded with hatred against Pope Eugenius. What happened to these, might as well to other Councils, and who can assure us it did not ?

But no liberty seemeth more requisite to the establishment of truth, than that which purgeth the mind from preconceived opinions, and addicts it wholly to truth. For it cannot be hoped, that they who are infected with error, should define rightly ? and immediately upon their entering the Council, from patrons of heresy become champions of faith. This experience hath often taught. For why did the Councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, define rightly, but because they consisted of orthodox bishops ? Why the African under Cyprian, and all the Arian Councils erroneously ; but because they were made up of bishops favouring those errors ?

Why the Council of Sardica both rightly and erroneously, well at Sardica, ill at Philippopolis ; but because the orthodox bishops stayed at Sardica, the heretical went to Philippopolis ? How comes it to pass therefore, that in assigning so many conditions of an infallible Council, this one should be forgotten, the most necessary of all, that it consists only of orthodox bishops ? Wisely then did the Popes, Leo and Vigilius, who laboured hard, that only an equal number of Greeks and Latins might be admitted into the fourth and fifth Councils, the one fearing the Eutychians, the other the enemies of the *Tria Capitula*. However it be, if threats and promises, if fear and desire can hinder orthodox bishops from defining truly ; much more will preconceived opinions hinder heretical ones from decreeing rightly : since the first are drawn to favour error unwillingly, and act in it coldly ; the latter promote it with their utmost zeal and greatest vigour.

Lastly, I do not see how, if a Council be placed beyond all danger of erring by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, fear, or any others passions can so far prevail in it, as to divert the Fathers of it from the right way. This might indeed be, if Councils were infallible in their nature ; but in their hypothesis, who ascribe their infallibility only to the external direction of the Holy Spirit, it is highly absurd and irrational. For cannot the Holy Ghost invincibly arm the minds of those, in whom he dwells, against the terrors of threats or temptations of desire ? Why then is the hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus*, sung before every session of Councils ? Why is it expressly said, *Accende lumen sensibus ; Infunde amorem cordibus ; Infirma nostri corporis virtute firmans perpeti* ? Why is he called the living fountain, fire, charity, and spiritual unction ? Why the finger of God's right hand, but to design his powerful assistance against all the defects of nature and infirmities of mind ? This assistance therefore is desired. If it be obtained, in vain are threats, bribes, promises, and other frauds ; they can never corrupt the Council. If it be not, who can assure us the other part of the petition is granted, *viz.* illumination of mind to discern and dispel the sophistry of heretics ? But why do I insist on this ? If we consider those holy men, in whom the Holy Ghost is thought to have dwelt, and armed with his graces for the defence of truth, as Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, and the rest ; we shall find that they were impenetrable to fear or flattery, and constantly despised both the threats and promises of Arian princes. If the Holy

Ghost therefore presides over Councils, neither the force nor fraud of enemies can obstruct the infallibility of it ; and we may much more justly and truly, than Richerius did before, apply those words of St. Paul to them, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." For he alleged them to prove that liberty is a condition pre-required to the presence of the Holy Ghost in a Council ; whereas the construction of them manifests it to be rather an effect of this presence ; according to that of our Saviour, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed :"* and "the truth shall make you free."† For the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Christ ; so that what is done by the one, may be well attributed to the other. But to make an end. Our adversaries found the infallibility of Councils upon the promises of the assistance of the Holy Ghost made to the Apostles by our Saviour in those words, "The Spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth ; I will send another Comforter," &c. which they maintain to have been spoken not only to the Apostles, but to their successors also to the world's end. If so, then must necessarily be conferred on both an infallibility of the same kind and quality. But were the Apostles preserved by the assistance of the Holy Ghost from involuntary errors, and left unarmed to the assaults of threats and promises ? Certainly no. Christ both promised and gave to them his assistance against all kind of temptations and corruptions, whereby they might be drawn to betray the truth. Either Councils therefore have the same assistance, or can pretend no share in these promises.

Two several ways, therefore, is the authority of Councils overthrown by the doctrine and concessions of our adversaries about the necessity of their liberty ; both in that it is certain they may be drawn from truth by any other means as well as defect of liberty, and uncertain whether there was ever any free Councils. The Sorbonists can oppose nothing to this ; but the monarchists think they can. They pretend that when a Council is thus corrupted, yet the rock of the Church, the Pope, remains unshaken, whom no force can move, as for whom Christ prayed, that his faith should never fail. For first, the Sorbonists deny this ; which sufficeth for me, as proving that pretended privilege of the Pope not to be of faith, and so not able to give certainty to the decrees of a Council, whose liberty is suspected. But then this invincible constancy of the Pope

* John viii. 36.

† Ibid. v. 32.

is demonstrated to be false by the examples of Marcellinus, Liberius, Paschal II. and Eugenius IV. to which we may add a fifth, that of Pope Vigilius, from whom the Emperor Justinian, after he had extorted by force and threats the condemnation of the *Tria Capitula* from the fifth Council, extorted an approbation of the Council's decree by the same method ; as he did afterwards in like manner from his successor Pelagius. Lupus* acknowledgeth both, saying, "that Vigilius, overcome with hardships, and the desire of recovering his liberty and see ; and Pelagius, corrupted with the desire of the Papal chair, both consented, and approved the Synod." Popes therefore, as well as Councils, may be drawn to decree against their consciences. Nowhere is to be found invincible constancy ; nowhere the desired certainty.

CHAP. XVI.

That it cannot be known, whether the Intention of the Fathers of the Council be right.

As lawfulness and liberty are necessary to the constitution of an infallible Council, so is a right proceeding in it, when constituted. This consists in three things ; a good intention, an accurate examination of the question to be defined, and a canonical conclusion. Every one of these beget new scruples and perplexities ; of which in their order. First, therefore, it is required, that the bishops, laying aside all worldly interests, seek only the finding out of truth, the glory of God, and edification of the Church. For they cannot define truth unless they know it. Know it they cannot, but either wholly by their own sagacity and industry, or by the assistance and illumination of the Holy Ghost. The first way must be and is acknowledged to be fallible by our adversaries, who therefore fly to the second, and impute all the certainty of conciliar definitions to the direction of the Holy Ghost. Hence the mass of the Holy Ghost, and the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, is wont to precede every session of Councils ; and this title prefixed to their decrees, "The holy universal Synod lawfully assembled

* Vigilius ærumnis lassus et libertatis ac sedis recuperandæ amore victus, tandem consensit in Synodum.—Pelagius Romani Episcopatus amore ad recipiendam Synodum est inflexus. Lup. in Concil. tom. 1. p. 737.

in the Holy Ghost ;” and oftentimes that other, “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us ;” which supposeth the Council to be directed and assisted by the Holy Ghost.

But can we imagine that Holy Spirit illuminates their minds, whose hearts he doth not sanctify and inflame with love of truth and zeal of divine glory? He inspireth not souls defiled with sin, and addicted to worldly considerations. So the author of the Book of Wisdom: “For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter; nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin. For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in.”* Our Saviour promiseth the knowledge of his truth only to those, who by piety and the love of heavenly things, have fitted their minds for the reception of it. So he tells the believing Jews, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”† And in another place, “He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and manifest myself to him.”‡ The like saith David,§ “The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way.” And a little after, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.” And St. Paul, speaking of them that received not the love of truth, that they might be saved, saith, “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.”|| And in another place asserteth, that “some having put away a good conscience, make shipwreck of the faith.”¶

These places cannot be eluded by saying, they speak of a practical and not a speculative knowledge of the truth. For besides that this can by no means be applied to the two last places, I cannot see with what appearance of reason God can be said to promise knowledge of truth to those that love him and fear him; and to the meek, who by being such, must be supposed to have had it before. A theoretical therefore, or more clear and distinct knowledge of the truth is to be understood to be here promised to virtuous and sincerely pious persons. Whence it cannot be supposed the same by the ordinary law of divine government is granted to profane and wicked bishops in a Council, if there be any such, as none denieth such may be.

* Sap. I. 4, 5.

§ Psal. xxv. 9.

† John viii. 31, 32.

|| 2 Thess. ii. 11.

‡ John xiv. 21.

¶ 1 Tim. i. 19.

This St. Chrysostom asserts, when upon those words, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" he saith, "What then? are not two or three gathered together in his name? Yes, but very rarely. For he doth not only mention a meeting (a Synod), or require that alone, but together with that requireth other virtues, and that with great exactness, and in the first place."* Nicholas de Clemangis† proveth the same thing largely and accurately. He affirms, the first four Councils were for no other reason had in so great honour, but because they consisted of holy and pious men; and denieth that wicked men are directed by the Holy Ghost. "For how should he hear, visit, or illustrate them, who resist him, and endeavour to extinguish him in others, when they cannot in themselves, who instead of the fire of charity are inflamed with the heat of ambition?" He observeth also, that the Fathers of ancient Councils used to begin their sessions with fastings, prayers, and tears; "which would have been unnecessary," saith he, "if they had been certain they could not err, nor be deceived in their undertakings, nor be defrauded of their desire for want of due preparation and disposition."

The presidents of the Council of Trent were persuaded of the truth of this. For in the beginning of the Council they penned an admonition, which they commanded frequently to be read, wherein they exhorted the Fathers to be touched with a true and lively sense of the sins that occasioned so many evils; that "otherwise in vain was the Council celebrated, in vain the Holy Ghost invoked."‡ For that he, how greatly soever entreated, would not be present: that repentance and reformation of life was absolutely necessary to obtain the assistance of that Holy Spirit, who had formerly refused to give any answer

* *Τί οὖν; οὐκ εἰσὶ δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ; Εἰσὶ μὲν, σπανίως δέ. Οὐ γὰρ ἀπλῶς τὴν σύνοδον λέγει, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἐπιζητεῖ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μάλιστα μὲν καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν μετὰ τούτου. Ἐπειτα δὲ καὶ τοῦτο αὐτὸ μετὰ πολλῆς ἀπαιτεῖ τῆς ἀκριβείας. Chrysost. in Matth. Homil. 60. [p. 686. vol. 7. Paris. 1836.]*

† *Illos quomodo audiat, aut visitet, aut illustret, qui sibi adversantur, illumque cum in se non possint, in aliis extinguere nituntur, qui pro igne charitatis, ardore sunt ambitionis inflammati? Clem. in disp. cum Schol. par.*

‡ *Nisi hæc bene cognita et perspecta fuerint, frustra intramus in concilium, frustra invocamus Spiritum Sanctum, &c. Hæc sunt quæ contristant et repellunt quem invocavimus Sp. S. sine quo nihil omnino facere poterimus, quod ad bonum et pacem Ecclesiæ cedat.*

to the Jews consulting him in the prophet Ezekiel, because of their abominations; that they must necessarily abstain from those things which are wont to corrupt the love of truth and deprave the judgment; as all passions and perturbations of the mind, anger, hatred, favour, or the like. "For these are the things which grieve and drive away the Holy Ghost, whom we have invoked; without whom we can do nothing that may tend to the good and peace of the Church." Hence may be noted the shameless folly of Cardinal Pallavicini's pretence, who would make his readers believe, that the presidents by all this meant no more, than that repentance and amendment of life was necessary, not to defining rightly, but to the successful execution of their definitions and happy extirpation of heresy. Consonantly to the admonition of the presidents, Didacus Payva Andradius, who was present in the Council, teacheth, "that those only may be said to meet in the name of Christ, whom not any private interests, not ambition, hatred, envy, or the like; but charity and the love of peace, truth, and piety actuates and enflames. For they who meet to serve their own interest or party, or to deceive mankind with the specious name of a Council; meet not in the name of Christ, nor are to be called ecclesiastical, but pestilent assemblies."* Lastly, Duval† absolutely requireth that the bishops act in the Council, "laying aside all human affections, and proposing to themselves only the finding out of truth." And in another place, "that no fraud, force, or injury be offered to any, that none of those present be prepossessed with any passion or commotion of mind, but that all be led with the love of truth."

It is manifest, therefore, both from reason and the confession of our adversaries, that truth cannot infallibly be defined in a Council, unless the bishops bring with them minds truly desirous of it, and animated with zeal for the honour of God; and moreover, cordially implore the divine assistance. But since this escapeth the knowledge of man, and is perceived by

* *Si vero in Christi nomine congregari dicuntur, quos non privata commoda inducunt, non honoris aura, &c. Nam qui ut privatis rationibus consulant, contentionibus serviant, miserosque homines specioso Concilii nomine decipiant coeunt; minime quidem in Christi nomine convenire, nec Ecclesiasticos, sed mortiferos conventus agitare dicendi sunt. Andr. def. Concil. Trid. lib. 1.*

† *Sepositis humanis affectibus, et sola sibi proposita veritate. Duval de Potest. Pont. part. 4. quæst. 6. Ubi nemini sit fraus, vis, aut injuria, nullusque adstantium animi motu aut passione præpeditur, sed omnes veritatis amore ducuntur. Id. qu. 10.*

God alone, the searcher of hearts ; whatsoever depends upon so dubious and obscure a condition must necessarily be uncertain. For who can certainly tell, whether all the bishops of any Council were prepared and disposed, and that nothing was indulged therein to flesh and blood ? Neither can you say, that this is indeed necessary, but never deficient ; that God takes care by his providence the bishops be rightly disposed, and fully perform their duty. For, first, God hath nowhere promised this ; and then experience hath proved the contrary. The vigilant care of God had no place in the second Ephesine Council, none in the two Constantinopolitan Synods against images under Leo Isaurus and Constantine Copronymus, if our adversaries speak true ; none in the Council of Basil, where the bishops were blinded with hatred against Eugenius, if we believe the partizans of the Court of Rome, who are wont abundantly to vilify all Councils that decreed contrary to their liking.

But they are neither the first nor the only persons that have complained of these abuses. All know what Gregory Nazianzen* writes of the Fathers of the first Council of Constantinople, whom he calls “ a tumultuous rabble, a factious assembly,” composed of ignorant and vile fellows newly taken from the plough, the oar, the army, and the chain, of the posterity of the collectors, who thought of nothing but falsifying their accounts, of mean mechanics newly started out of their shops,† some of them “ mere rascals and fitter to be placed in houses of correction.” Yet this is the second of the four most ancient and most famous Councils ; which Gregory I., and with him many others, profess to reverence equally with the four Gospels. These irregularities made Nazianzen resolve never to be present in any more Synods,‡ “ where nothing but strife, contentions, and exposing of one another’s faults, and thence mortal hatred on each side, were to be observed.” Isidore Peleusiota§ writes to Cyril of Alexandria, president of the first Ephesine Synod, that many of those who were present in Ephesus, accused him, “ that seeking the revenge of a private injury, he did not orthodoxly inquire after the things of Christ.” And in another place he exhorts him to “ leave off contention, and not take revenge of the Church for his private injuries, and sow eternal

* Naz Querel. de Episcopis, et hominum ingratitude.

† Flagriones et pistrinis digni.

‡ “Ἐνθ’ ἔρις, ἐνθα μῶθος τε καὶ αἰσχεα κρυπτὰ πάροισεν εἰς ἕνα δυσμενέων χώρον ἀγειρόμενα. Naz. Carm. X. de Divers. vitæ gener.

§ Isid. Epist. 310.

discord under pretext of piety." Of Pelagius Legate, afterwards Pope of Rome, and Theodorus, bishop of Cæsarea, whereof one procured Origen, the other Theodorus of Mopsuestia to be condemned, and so occasioned the fifth Synod; Liberatus saith,* "it is manifest that by those two this scandal entered into the Church," which Theodorus also publicly confessed, crying out that he and Pelagius deserved to be burned alive for introducing that scandal. And Garnerius,† in his notes upon that place, confesseth "the thing was undertaken with a furious partiality, and incredibly imbittered minds." Not to say that Lupus in a passage above cited makes Justinian in this whole business a partizan of Theodorus, and all the Greek bishops slaves to him. Lastly, an eminent writer,‡ Claudius Sainctes, who went with the other French divines to the Council of Trent, relates what he observed there in these words, speaking to Espencæus: "Never were you more plainly inspired by God than when you refused to come hither. For I doubt not but you would have died with grief, if you had seen those wicked arts, which are put in practice to elude a reformation."

If any one shall suspect the like of any other Council, he will have no mean authors for his leaders in it. However that the Fathers of any Council were better inclined, must appear to us otherwise than from the universality of it; since learned men have long since observed, that many in œcumenical Councils have sought any thing rather than the glory of God. Yet is that the only way that is or can be offered for our assurance therein.

* *Illud liquere omnibus credo per Pelagium, &c. hoc scandalum in Ecclesiam fuisse ingressum; quod etiam publice ipse Theodorus clamitavit se et Pelagium, vivos incendendos, per quos hoc scandalum intravit in mundum. Liberat. Brev. cap. ult.*

† *Etsi negotium hoc vesano partium studio, infensisque incredibiliter animis susceptum est.*

‡ *Nusquam præsentiori numine afflatus es, quam cum venire isthuc noluiisti. Nullus enim dubito, quin præ dolore mortuus esses, si ea vidisses, quæ ad eludendam reformationem infanda patrantur. Cl. Sanct. Epist. ad Espencæ.*

CHAP. XVII.

That it seldom appears, whether a sufficient inquiry hath preceded the Decrees of a Council.

THE second part of a lawful proceeding in the Council is a diligent inquiry and examination of the question to be defined. For truth is not now obtained by immediate revelation, or ecstatic inspiration, but by a labour and diligence proportionate to the difficulty of the thing itself. The bishop of a Council must carefully inquire into the truth, patiently hear both parties, maturely weigh the arguments on both sides, accurately compare them with the invariable rule of faith, and then only when they are conscious to themselves they have omitted no part of requisite diligence, to pronounce sentence. This is the constant opinion of our adversaries as well as ours. Melchior Canus* teacheth, that "in Councils the Fathers ought not immediately by their authority to give sentence; but the matter must be first weighed in conferences, and prayers offered up to God; then shall the question be determined by the Council without error, the assistance and favour of God, the diligence and study of men conspiring together." And then from the examples of the Councils of Jerusalem and Nice, he concludeth, "It is manifest that the Holy Ghost assists not the Fathers when idle and careless, but diligently seeking out the truth of the question proposed, by human means and ways; wherefore they which call in doubt the diligence of Popes and Councils in defining a matter of faith, must necessarily invalidate the decrees of Popes and Councils." The same saith Ferus in Act xv. 7. Bellarmine de Concil. lib. 2. cap. 7. Duval Anteloq. ad lib. de potest. Pont. et part. 2. qu. 4. Cellotius de Hierarchiâ, lib. 4. cap. 10. Bagotius Instit. Theol. lib. 4. disp. 5. cap. 4. sect. 1. Maimbourg de la vraie Eglise, cap. 10. sect. 4. et 9. Martinonus de fide, disp. 9. sect. 7. whose

* In Conciliis non debent Patres mox quasi ex autoritate sententiam absque alia discussione dicere; sed collationibus et disputationibus re ante tractata, precibusque primum ad Deum fuis; tum vero quæstio a Concilio sine errore finietur; Dei sc. auxilio atque favore, hominumque diligentia et studio conspirantibus.—Ex quo perspicuum est non dormientibus et oscitantibus Patribus Spiritum Sanctum assistere, sed diligenter humana via et ratione quærentibus rei de qua disseritur veritatem—quamobrem qui sive Pontificum sive Conciliorum diligentiam in fidei causa finienda in dubium vocant, eos necesse est Pontificum judicia ac Conciliorum infirmare. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5. [Lovan. 1569.]

words would be too long to cite at large. The Sorbonists maintain the same thing. So Richerius :* “The Church cannot err in deciding questions of right, if she useth necessary diligence, and acts prudently, as the African Fathers say in their epistle to Pope Celestine.” Holden :† “In an infallible Synod all things ought to be done conciliarly (as divines speak), so as the matter in hand be discussed with a diligent and faithful examination, without any making of parties, or soliciting of votes.”

If these divines be in the right, as they certainly are, then what certainty can be in the decrees of Councils? Who shall assure us, that the bishops did all they ought to do? And how shall every private man know that? Canus was not ignorant of this. “If once (saith he‡) we give heretics leave to call in question the requisite diligence of the judges of the Church, who doth not see, that all the decrees of Popes and Councils are presently overthrown?” He therefore takes refuge in the providence of God, and pretends that God, in promising infallibility to his Church, must be supposed to have obliged himself thereby, to take care that necessary diligence, which is the means of it, should never be wanting in the judges of the Church. “Hence (saith he) the Pope always performs his duty, the Council their duty, when they pronounce of faith; and if any of our divines think otherwise, our cause is ruined.”

In this argument of Canus I observe first, that he confounds the means with the conditions. Diligence is a condition which God imposeth upon the finding out truth. If the Council neglects this, God is bound to no promise; the error is to be imputed wholly to them. Secondly, if the Council can neglect no condition, no diligence necessary to defining rightly, and always punctually perform their duty, it is impossible it should

* *Ecclesia errare non potest in quæstionibus juris decidendis; si modo diligentiam necessariam adhibeat et prudenter agat: ut Patres Africani loquuntur. Rich. Apol. ax. 23.*

† *Debent omnia in hujusmodi Synodo conciliariter (ut loquuntur Theologi) peragi; ita ut prævio examine diligenti et fideli absque suffragiorum ambitu aut sollicita prensatione discutiatur subjecta materia. Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 2. cap. 3.*

‡ *Si semel hæreticis hanc licentiam permittimus, ut in quæstionem vocent, &c. quis adeo cæcus est ut non videat omnia mox Pontificum Conciliorumque decreta labefactari?—Itaque præstat semper Pontifex quod in se est, præstatque Concilium, cum de fide pronunciant; caditque causa, si quis e nostris aliter existimat. Can. ubi supra.*

ever err. For the Divine assistance will never be wanting to human industry in matters of faith ; and when both meet, there can be no error. Thirdly, if Councils therefore perform their duty, because God in promising to them infallibility, the end, must be supposed also to promise the means, whereof this is one ; then every Council is infallible, none ought to be rejected, all are indifferently to be received ; because God must be believed to have promised his assistance to all Councils, not wanting in their duty, and also to take care that none should be wanting in it. You will say perhaps Canus understands not all, but only lawful Councils. But I would know what are those lawful Councils. For Councils are such three ways, upon account of their indiction, constitution, and proceeding. If you answer by the two first ways, then the thing is false. For the second Council of Ephesus, by the confession of Bellarmine and Baronius, was both rightly called and constituted, yet degenerated and proceeded inordinately. If he means the third way, then his answer will come to no more than this, that Councils will proceed rightly, if they proceed rightly.

But to put an end to this pretence : none will deny that the Council of Constance was lawful ; yet Canus confesseth, that necessary diligence was not always used in it. “ Some things (saith he*) were not acted conciliarly, for in the fourth and fifth sessions no disputation or disquisition preceded : no learned men were chosen to dispute and treat of those things that were to be defined in faith.” The same thing is acknowledged by Richerius of the great Council of Lateran under Innocent III., wherein transubstantiation and the deposition of heretical princes were decreed. “ We learn (saith he†) out of Matthew Paris, that nothing was acted conciliarly in that Council after the manner of other Councils, the common votes and suffrages of the Fathers not being singly discussed, weighed, and collected. When therefore it is one thing only to read a few articles in a Council (and so shuffle them up, for

* Quædam non conciliariter acta. Nam in IV. et V. sessione nec disputatio aut disquisitio aliqua intercesserat, nec delecti fuerant adhuc viri docti ad differendum et tractandum ea quæ in fidei doctrina essent constituenda. Id. lib. 5. cap. ult.

† Ex Matthæo Par. discimus nihil quicquam actum in illa Synodo conciliariter ex more aliorum Conciliorum, nimirum communibus votis atque suffragiis Patrum sigillatim discussis, perpensis et collectis.—Cum ergo aliud sit aliqua recitare capitula in Concilio, aliud, &c. Rich. Apol. ax. 38.

no more was done), another thing to examine and decree them synodically and canonically, using due diligence." In vain doth Bellarmine labour to palliate the business. So Maimbourg* observeth that the ancient Councils were far more diligent than the modern; and for an example of this degeneracy brings this very Council of Lateran; wherein the weightiest matters of faith, manners, and discipline were defined, and (which took up most of their time) peace and war treated of; and all concluded in three weeks. The same author in another place† wonders how the Council of Lyons under Innocent IV. wherein many things, the least whereof would require a long and tedious discussion, were decreed, could be finished in three sessions. But neither in elder times was due diligence always observed. Whosoever shall read the canons of the Council of Sardica, will easily perceive how hastily they were made. Hosius propounded what he thought fit. He asked the bishops whether it pleased them. They cried out, it did; nothing more was done: his propositions immediately became canons. So in the Council of Chalcedon in one session, or rather end of a session, when the Pope's legates and Emperor's commissioners were gone out, thinking the session was ended, suddenly twenty-eight canons were clapped up; whereof every one deserved a long consideration.

Neither can you say that greater care and diligence is wont to be used in defining matters of faith. Here also it is often wanting. For where should we rather expect to find it, than in weighing the arguments on both sides, consulting the rule of faith, and searching out the sense of Scripture? Yet nothing is more frequent in the decrees of Councils than to find trifling reasons, false glosses upon Scripture, and impertinent allegations. Upon such sandy and weak foundations are their definitions often built. Canus, Bellarmine, Valentia, and many others confess this. I will produce now only Holden and Duval. Holden‡ saith, that the prefaces, reasons, arguments, and illustrations of conciliar decrees "have not the virtue of a definition." Duval:§ "We confidently assert, that

* Maimb. de Bello sacro, lib. 11. ad an. 1215.

† Ibid. ad an. 1245.

‡ Nequaquam habent virtutem definitionis. Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 2. cap. 3.

§ Audacter asserimus maximam partem actorum ad fidem non pertinere.—Item rationes quibus Patres in decernendis conclusionibus nituntur. Duval. Anteloq.

the greatest part of the acts (of Councils) pertain not to faith : also the reasons which the Fathers rely upon in decreeing their conclusions." To prove this, he brings the example of the seventh Synod ; which defined angels might be painted, because they are corporeal ; and of the Synod of Eliberis, which forbade candles to be lighted in churchyards, lest the souls of the dead should be disturbed. To these he might have added many more examples, and particularly out of the second Council of Nice ; where, for the sake of images, Scripture, Fathers, and logic are most shamefully abused ; so as may create indignation and laughter together. Now I ask, whether those can be said to have examined the matter in hand diligently, used the rule of faith rightly, and considered the arguments on both sides maturely ; who obtrude such impertinent trifles for solid foundations of their decrees ? Nay, even in the Council of Trent, where they disputed so sharply and copiously, too much haste was sometimes made in their proceedings. Certainly when they decreed the vulgar version to be authentic ; in whatsoever sense that be understood, they must have decided an infinite number of things at the same time. For thereby the Synod pronounced there was no verse in it which was not the pure word of God, at least, contained nothing false. How great and how accurate an examination did this require ? Yet none at all used, the version not so much as read before them ; but the thing defined, as if it were self-evident. Rashly, therefore ; and if rashly, why not falsely ? In a word, this condition is neither always fulfilled ; nor can it be known, but by a very few, when it is so.

From what hath been said, appeareth how rashly and untruly Canus affirmed necessary diligence to be never wanting to Councils. Richerius, therefore, having related our objection and the answer of Canus, pronounceth thus : " By this means he solves not the difficulty, but rather involveth it, and daubs it over, as he is wont to do."* He promiseth a better solution, and having cited a passage of Peter de Alliaco, wherein he saith, that infallibility is only a privilege of the universal Church, that it may be piously believed Councils do not err if they be guided by Scripture, otherwise they have erred, answers, that " in this case a moral and probable conjecture, such as wise men make use of in the actions of life, is sufficient ;

* Sicque difficultatem non solvit, sed potius involvit atque incrustat, ut sæpe alias solet. Rich. Hist. Concil. ib. l. cap. 9. [p. 265. Colon. 1683.]

and when it is manifest that the Council be free, and the Fathers have used necessary diligence, we must acquiesce in their decrees, unless they be clearly repugnant to faith.”* How near to truth doth the good doctor approach? For first, he rejects not the opinion of the Cardinal; which, if admitted, will soon put an end to the controversy. Secondly, by the last clause of his answer he confesseth that a Council free, and using requisite diligence, may pronounce contrary to the faith. Otherwise the exception would be vain, if the case could never happen. Lastly, when he flieth to a probable conjecture, he doth thereby plainly acknowledge, that certainty cannot be had; which sufficeth for me. For if our adversaries confess they want certainty, I shall not envy them their probability.

CHAP. XVIII.

That it is uncertain, whether plurality of Suffrages ought to overcome, or whether perfect unanimity be required. That in both cases no small difficulties occur.

THERE remains the last part of a lawful proceeding, the conclusion; whereby the president of the Council, when he hath heard the suffrages of the Fathers, solemnly pronounceth sentence. Concerning this is no small controversy, *viz.* whether the president of the Council, whosoever he be, ought to give sentence according to the major part of the suffrages; or whether a full or absolute unanimity be necessary; and whether the same account is to be made of a decree made by the votes of all, and by the votes of the major part. The monarchists distinguish here, and say, that if the Pope himself presideth, and perceives either the major part of all to favour error, he may deny his assent to them, and give sentence as himself pleaseth. But if only the legates preside, and have instructions what to do; if the major number of votes be consonant to their instructions, they may give sentence without expecting unanimity; if repugnant, they must suspend

* Censeo hic moralem et probabilem conjecturam, qualem rebus agendis sapientes impendere consueverunt, sufficere; atque ubi constat liberum fuisse, Concilium et Patres diligentiam adhibuisse necessariam, plane acquiescendum esse, neque contra sententiam Concilii esse aliquid dicendum nisi forte aperte constaret aliquid contra fidem esse patratum. Id. Ibid.

their assent on both sides, and refer all to the Pope, who may determine it as he pleaseth. However, regularly and ordinarily they think plurality of votes ought to overcome. So Bellarmine: "That decree of a Council is true, which is made by the major part; otherwise no decree of a Council would be lawful, since some have dissented in all."* And in another place† produceth the example of the Council of Chalcedon, which declared heretics ten Egyptian bishops who would not acquiesce in the judgment of the major part: and in a third place saith, "there will never be an end of controversies, unless we give place to the major part of suffrages."‡ The same saith Tho. Bosius,§ and many others. This opinion seemeth also to have obtained at Trent. For when the Fathers were divided about abolishing clandestine marriages, 56 bishops against the decree, 133 for it, and both parties obstinate, they agreed to consult the Pope; who gave sentence for the decree: and his approbation, saith Cardinal Pallavicini,|| took away all doubt. Yet this was not always done. For although 30 bishops, and among them the legate Seripandus privily, opposed the decree, whereby it was defined that Christ offered up himself in his last supper; yet the decree was promulged and stood in force.

Far different was the opinion of J. Fr. Picus Mirandula,¶ who, in dissensions of a Council, thought "the major part was to be adhered to, *cæteris paribus*, that is, provided neither were repugnant to Scripture. But if that happened, then that part was to be followed, either major or minor, which had Scripture on its side. For that if the major part would decree anything against Scripture, the minor were to be adhered to: yea, a simple rustic, an infant, and an old woman were to be believed rather than the Pope and 1000 bishops, if these spoke against the Gospel, those for it." Gerson had said the same thing before him: "If any private person without authority should be excellently learned in the Scriptures, his assertion

* Est verum decretum Concilii, quod fit a majori parte; alioqui nullum esset legitimum Concilii decretum, cum semper aliqui dissentiant. Bell. de Concil. lib. 2. cap. 11. [p. 50. vol. 2, ut supra.]

† Ibid. lib. 1. cap. 18. [p. 22.]

‡ Nisi detur locus majori parti suffragiorum. lib. 1. cap. 21.

§ Bos. de Signis Eccl. lib. 16. cap. 9.

|| Ejus approbatio sustulit omnem dubitationem. Hist. Concil. Trid.

¶ Quia si pars major contra divinas literas decernere quicquam vellet, numero minori adhærendum esset. Quinimo simplici potius rustico, et infanti, et aniculæ, quam et Pontifici et mille Episcopis credendum, si contra Evangelium isti, illi pro Evangelio verba facerent. Pic. Theor. 16.

were to be believed in matters of faith, before the declaration of the Pope.* And in case he were present in a General Council, he ought to oppose himself to it, if he perceived the major part, either through malice or ignorance, go contrary to the Scriptures." But if this opinion be true, and private men may judge which part in a Council follows Scripture, which the contrary; then as often as there be dissensions in Councils, their power in defining will not be supreme, as being subject to the examination of all men. Beside, if the major part of a Council can manifestly and directly vote contrary to Scripture, much more can they do it obscurely and indirectly, and therefore may be even then mistaken, when their error is not manifest. And if so, the decrees of the major part can in no case, not *cæteris paribus*, be securely believed.

For these reasons perhaps Cardinal Turrecremata maintains,† "that in a doubtful controversy not yet defined, the major part must be adhered to." But neither is this opinion safe. For if we must stand to the plurality, shall truth always overcome? Hath truth that excellent fortune as to please always the greater part? Let Canus be heard: "I deny," saith he,‡ "that in matters of faith the judgment of the major part ought to be followed. For we do not here as in human judgments, measure the sentence by the number of suffrages. We see frequently, that the greater overcomes the better part. We know that those things are not always best, that please most. We know that in things of faith the opinion of wise men is to be preferred. Now wise men are few, but fools innumerable. Four hundred prophets lied to Ahab, while one Micaiah spoke truth. The greater part of the second Ephesine Synod sided with the wicked Dioscorus." Bannes,§ his disciple, hath the like words; and Salmeron the same.|| And indeed it may easily be, that more heretical than orthodox bishops be present in a Council; as well because the greater part of all the bishops in the world may be infected with heresy, as we shall prove

* Si aliquis simplex non autorizatus, esset excellenter in S. literis eruditus, potius credendum esset in casu doctrinæ suæ assertioni, quam Papæ declarationi. Et talis eruditus si, &c. Gers. de Exam. doctrin. Part. 1. Consid. 5. [Paris. 1521.]

† In controversia quæ dubia est et nondum definita, arguendum est a majore parte. Tur. de Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 65.

‡ Nego, cum de fide agitur, sequi plurimorum judicium oportere, &c. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5. [Lovan. 1569.]

§ Bann. in 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 10. dub. 4.

|| Salm. tom. 12. tract. 79.

hereafter; as because the heretics, even although fewer in number in the whole Church, may, incited by a perverse zeal, flock to the Council in greater numbers than the Catholics, Now what can we expect from such an assembly? What, but that every one should pronounce according to his preconceived opinion, and decree that which he thinks most true?

The fear of this made the Popes, Leo and Vigilius, desire before the fourth and fifth Councils, that an equal number of Western and Eastern bishops might be present in them. For the like cause Richerius complaineth,* that in the Council of Trent there were more Italian bishops than of all other nations together: and this he makes to be the cause of the exorbitant power of the Pope in all latter Councils, and of introducing a new and unheard of way of proceeding into them; the Italian bishops being almost all the Pope's creatures and obnoxious to him. Thus he computes out of the acts of the Council, that from the beginning to the end of it there were present 187 Italian bishops, but out of other nations no more than 80. Further, our adversaries do not deny, that a Council gathered out of one half of the Christian world, may totally err; as for example, the Council of Constantinople under Copronymus, consisting of 338 bishops, who decreed images were to be abolished. To make this Council œcumenical there wanted only the presence of two or three Western bishops. Suppose them present, and opposing the decree of all the rest. How must the president then have pronounced, if with the major part, an œcumenical Council would have erred, and the decree would have been heretical in the opinion of our adversaries?

Moved with these reasons, some of our adversaries, as well monarchists as Sorbonists, deny, that plurality of votes ought to overcome in Councils, and account only those decrees certain, which are established by the unanimous consent of all. This was the opinion of Cusanus which he proveth from the eighth Synod,† and then adds: "See how consent chiefly in

* Rich. Hist. Concil. lib. 14. cap. ult. Novam et inauditam rationem procedendi. [Pontifices sedulam operam dederant ut in Tridentino Concilio Episcopi Italiæ triplo ferme aliarum Provinciarum episcopos superarent: Quocirca Italiæ Episcopi assueti dominationi Curiae Romanæ toti a nutu Pontificis tanquam absoluti monarchæ pendebant. p. 91. lib. 4. Pars secunda, Colon. 1681.]

† Ecce concordantiam maxime in iis quæ fidei sunt requiri: et quanto major est concordantia, tanto infallibilis iudicium.—Unde licet in Synodis universalibus plura necessaria sint, maxime tamen communis omnium sententia. Cus. Concord. Cath. lib. 2. cap. 4.

those things which are of faith is required : and by how much the greater this consent is, so much the more infallible is the decree. Whence although in universal Synods many things be necessary, yet most of all is the common consent of all." So Holden : "Although it be the testimony of the major part of a Council, if it be not universal and general, it hath not the perfect certainty of tradition."* Richerius seemeth to be of the same mind,† although he speaks not so plainly. Nor do Stapleton‡ or Duval§ differ from it. But neither doth this opinion want its inconveniences. For, first, hereby Councils are in a manner rendered useless. For it cannot easily be imagined, unless some factious conspiracy should intervene, that all should think the same thing, especially if they be many. And indeed we have few examples of Councils, wherein the bishops were unanimous. In that of Nice were some Arians, at Sardica more, at Ephesus many Nestorians, at Chalcedon not a few Eutychians ; and so of the rest : which according to this hypothesis must be all expunged out of the number of lawful Councils. Secondly, the infallibility of Councils will hereby become unuseful ; for they could never pronounce sentence. There would be always two or three heretics present in the Council, who, to prevent the condemnation of their heresy, need do no more than speak their minds, and dissent from the votes of the rest. Thus the power of the universal Church shall be overthrown, and all methods of extinguishing heresy eluded by the stubbornness of two or three heretics. However it be, the Council of Basil, which the Sorbonists so much extol, thought far otherwise, and particularly the president of it, Lewis, cardinal of Arles. For when, in treating of defining three assertions that raised a Council above the Pope, the major part voted the affirmative, although many Fathers, and among them the famous canonist Panormitan, dissented, and even protested against it ; yet the president pronounced sentence in the affirmative, and that sentence was held valid ; as Æneas Sylvius largely relates.||

Whichsoever opinion therefore our adversaries embrace, they involve themselves in inextricable difficulties. But I will not any further urge them. It sufficeth, what none will deny, that it is not certain, whether the major part must take place, or

* Imo tametsi plurimorum fuerit in Concilio congregatorum testimonium, nisi universum et Catholicum sit, traditionis certitudinem perfectam non habet. Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 1. cap. 9.

† Rich. Apol. ax. 22.

‡ Stapl. de Princip. lib. 7. cap. 9.

§ Duval. Anteloq.

|| Hist. Concil. Basil. lib. 1.

unanimity be required. Both may be defended, and neither is self-evident, nor revealed by God, nor defined by the Church; as all acknowledge. If this then be uncertain, it will be also uncertain what decrees of Councils were lawfully concluded, and consequently what command and deserve belief.

CHAP. XIX.

That it cannot be known from the subsequent Approbation of the Church, which were lawful Councils.

FROM what hath been hitherto said concerning Councils, it is most evident both from the reason of things, and the principles of our adversaries, that the infallibility of Councils is a mere phantasm; that if there were any infallible Councils, they must be such as are œcumenical, free, lawful, and rightly proceeding; that it cannot be yet certainly known, whether all these conditions be singly necessary, and whether all together suffice: that if that were stated, it were unknown, what is required to make a Council œcumenical, what free, and so in the rest; and much more uncertain, which or whether any were so; that the lawfulness, freedom, right intention, necessary diligence, and other conditions of an infallible Council can never be certainly applied to any particular Synod.

Many of these things are of that nature, that they cannot be known even by the bishops of the Council themselves. They can tell, for example, whether themselves have a right intention, and be corrupted with no interest or passion; but to know whether all the rest be equally sincere, is wholly impossible. They no less than others must be uncertain what are the conditions necessary to constitute an infallible Council; which neither God hath revealed, the Church defined, nor the consent of doctors determined. If these things cannot be known by the Fathers of a Council, how shall they by the other bishops far distant in the remote parts of the world? How by every one of the common people, by mechanics, husbandmen, and women, whose judgment is so small, and notions so obscure? Again, if not of the present and later Councils, how of the first and ancient ones, which length of time hath involved in darkness, and left to be known only by conjectures? How shall the most learned men be assured of the freedom, legality, and all other necessary conditions of these Councils,

perhaps from the testimony of one or two historians? As if infinite errors of historians were not daily found out, proceeding either from ignorance, malice, or partiality.

But both of ancient and later Councils, this is chiefly to be considered, that the conditions necessary to make them infallible, are of that nature, that one cannot supply the defect of another. It sufficeth not to have some of them, nor even all the rest, if any one be wanting. This Council must at the same time be œcumenical, lawful, free, and proceed rightly. If any one of these conditions, or any part of them be wanting, all the rest are of no value, the Council becomes fallible. Whence many Councils, at least decrees of Councils, have been rejected, that were deficient but in one condition.

Hence it may be concluded, First, that the Sorbonists have no firm foundation for their faith, having nothing to oppose to so many just doubts and reasonable exceptions: for they think not sufficient the judgment of the Pope, declaring any Council to have wanted no necessary conditions of infallibility, and reject many, in favour of which he hath so declared. They take their judgment from the sole consideration of the Council itself, and what was acted in it. Secondly, That the sentence of Pope and Council together is no more certain than that of Pope alone; and that those therefore err, who make not the judgment of either separately, but of both conjunctly, to be a firm foundation for faith and certainty. This might be perhaps with some colour of truth defended, if either all Councils agreeing with the Pope, were admitted as infallible; or it were certainly known what are those Councils which conjoined to the Pope obtain that privilege. But both are false. For all our adversaries, which acknowledge not the infallibility of Pope alone, allow it not also to him when united to a Council not œcumenical, or not lawfully constituted, or not rightly proceeding. Now what Councils are œcumenical, what lawfully constituted, and what rightly proceed, we have proved that none can know. Unless the Pope therefore hath infallibility, no certainty can accrue from his judgment by the addition of any Council. Which is also hence confirmed; that the sentence, whereby the Pope pronounceth a Council to have been œcumenical, lawful, &c. comes from his sole authority. For although the Council should pronounce the same thing together with him, their sentence would be of no value, as being pronounced in their own cause. So that the decree of the Pope alone cannot be of any efficacy in this matter; which, if

it cannot afford certainty, neither will the decree of Pope and Council together, at least no more certainty than that of Pope alone.

Turn therefore the authority of Pope and Council on all sides, take it separately, conjunctly, divided, united : no certainty, no firmness, no foundation for divine faith will be ever obtained. One thing only our adversaries may pretend, that the decrees of Councils become then certain, when the universal Church shall have received them. I have not indeed yet met with any who allege this. But I doubt not that many, forced by the precedent arguments, will take refuge there ; and will therefore, before I proceed any farther, demonstrate the vanity and falseness of this pretence.

And first, I oppose to it, what I have before observed, that hereby particular are equalled and put into the same condition with General Councils, contrary to the sense of all Christians, both ancient and modern, who constantly give the greatest deference to General Councils. Not to say, that since hereby firm assent cannot be given to a General Council not received by the Church, nor denied to a particular one received by her ; it would be foolish and absurd to call a General Council, with infinite trouble and difficulty, when a particular one may define and decree with the same authority. Secondly, if the Church reject some Councils, and admit other, there must be some reason of this different judgment. This reason must be taken either from the conditions necessary to the Council's infallibility, as universality, freedom, and the rest, or from the matters decreed in the Council, their conformity or repugnance to the rules of faith. If from the first, all the difficulties which we proposed in the foregoing chapters will take place. For whether such a Council were œcumenical, or rightly constituted, or did rightly proceed, being all matters of fact, the universal Church may err in judging of them : and so by her judgment manifested in the reception or rejection of the Council, can neither add to, nor take away any certainty from it. Besides, I have shewn that the conditions of an infallible Council cannot be known even by the Church when they are fulfilled and when not. For if the bishops present cannot know it, much less those divided by great distance of place. Can the Americans or Chinese know whether no bribes, no solicitations of votes, or making of parties was used at Trent ? The existence of such a Council they know only by uncertain rumours. In vain is a certain knowledge hoped for. How-

ever it be, to determine a thing of this nature and moment requireth an accurate and diligent inquisition and examination of all circumstances. Such an examination neither ever was nor can be made by the universal Church. For that would require a judiciary kind of process, which the Church out of a Council cannot observe. For our adversaries ascribe to the universal Church only a passive infallibility in believing, not an active in defining. But grant she can judge of this matter. Did she ever do it? Was the Council of Trent thus examined by her? What witnesses were heard? What inquisition made, either by all bishops or any other? The acts of it were always kept secret, and are to this day held prisoners in the Vatican, far from being submitted to the examination of the universal Church. The canons are indeed promulged. But if any one should examine them by himself, whether to be admitted or rejected, as the Gallican Church rejected all those canons which concern ecclesiastical discipline, that respects only the matter of the Council, *viz.* the truth or falseness, justice or injustice of its decrees, but not the form of it, *viz.* the legality, right constitution and proceeding of it; of which only we are now treating. So Lupus tells us that the reason why almost all the western bishops rejected the fifth Council was, not any defect in the form of it, but their respect to the ancient custom of the Church, of condemning no man after his death that died in the Catholic communion,* honour to the memory of Theodorus of Mopsuestia, so famous over all the east, and reverence to the canons of Chalcedon, whose authority they thought infringed by the decrees of this Council. So the ancient French and English rejected the seventh and eighth Synods, only for the falseness of their decrees, and defining the lawfulness of image-worship, which the others looked upon as idolatry and contrary to the faith; because "they had defined otherwise than the orthodox doctors had defined before them," saith Ademar Cabanensis:† because they decreed "many things inconvenient and contrary to the true faith," saith Hoveden.‡ Lastly, that the Church in admitting Councils respects the matter, not the form of them, may be

* In Concil. tom. I. pp. 742, 744.

† De imaginibus adorandis aliter quam Orthodoxi Doctores ante definierant, statuerunt. Adem. apud Marcam de Concord. lib. 6. cap. 15.

‡ Multa inconvenientia et veræ fidei contraria. Hovenden ad Ann. 792.

hence proved ; because the Church sometimes approveth the decrees of unlawful Councils, as of Antioch, which Baronius accounts unlawful,* because celebrated, while the indiction of the Synod of Rome was yet depending ; and did certainly act unlawfully in condemning Athanasius, and substituting to him Eusebius, a laic, and when he refused George the Cappadocian, a man unknown to the Church of Alexandria. Yet the canons of this Synod were afterwards received, as also the decrees of the fifth Council ; which Baronius, and with him not a few, think to have proceeded unlawfully.

There remains then to the Church only the latter way of examining Councils, that is from the matter of them, by examining the truth and falseness of its decrees, admitting the one and rejecting the other. This examination we not only admit, but also pray that it may obtain. But then it supposeth the fallibility (in the first place) of a Council ; otherwise why are her decrees examined ? why not all promiscuously and reverently received ? Secondly, hereby not a Council, but the universal Church will be the supreme and ultimate tribunal, as judging and irrevocably giving sentence upon the decrees of the Council, which may be either approved or abrogated by her. Thirdly, hence it will also follow, that the decrees of a Council must not be assented to, till received by the Church, because not till then certainly known to be true : contrary to the constant practice of our adversaries, by whom the decrees are admitted immediately after sentence pronounced, at least immediately after the Pope's confirmation. Fourthly, Councils themselves plainly shew that they are of a contrary opinion, by denouncing anathemas against the opposers of their decrees, or disbelievers of their definitions, not staying till the universal Church shall have approved both ; which demonstrateth that they believe a supreme and uncontrollable authority to reside in themselves. And this very argument is made use of by Bellarmine to prove that Councils are supreme in which the Pope's legates are present. Lastly, hence it will follow that the decrees of a Council ought never to be assented to. For the universal Church is nothing else but the collection of Christians. If therefore all single persons expect till the universal Church receive the decrees, the universal Church itself must expect ; and so nobody shall ever begin to receive and assent to them.

* Ad An. 341.

Further, it may be observed, that to make this approbation of the Church of any weight, it were necessary that this opinion should be generally received, at least not opposed by any bishop. For then immediately after the promulgation of the decrees, all bishops would betake themselves to examine them by the rules of faith. If after this examination they received them, then an approbation of the universal Church might with some colour be pretended. But now when all, at least almost all, are of a contrary opinion, and look upon the decrees, when once confirmed by the Pope, as infallible; they receive them without any precedent examination; whereby this reception becomes of no value, as grounded upon a preconceived opinion, which we have proved to be false. This may be illustrated by what an anonymous author of the Sorbonist party saith.* He denieth those subscriptions are to be accounted of, whereby many assent to the Pope's Constitutions when transmitted to them; that they are not to be compared with the decrees of Councils; because the bishops act not therein as judges, nor examine what they subscribe. If this reason be valid in that case, it will be much more in the confirmation of Councils by the subsequent reception of the Church. For much fewer doubt of the infallibility of a Council confirmed by the Pope, than of the infallibility of the Pope alone. He subjoineth another reason of the invalidity of these subscriptions; because they are commonly extorted by threats and fear of being deposed from their bishoprics if they should dissent. But hath not this happened in urging the reception of a Council? Certainly Baronius largely relateth how the Emperor Justinian deprived and banished those bishops who would not admit the decrees of the fifth Council, and condemn the *Tria Capitula*.†

Lastly, it is certain there are very few Councils, if any, to which all Christians, and consequently the universal Church subscribed. This was shewed before, and might be further proved. Whence among many other things these two may be concluded: First, that all Christians never thought the approbation of the universal Church to be the only rule of admitting or rejecting Councils; since there are none, which

* Les desseins des Jesuites representes a l'assemblée du Clergé, p. 43.

† Siquidem illi qui damnationem trium Capitulorum non reciperent, Imperatoris jussu in exilium agebantur. Bar. ad an. 553. [Antv. 1597.]

although rejected by the rest, many did not receive. Secondly, that the unanimous approbation of the whole Church is no sufficient and ready means to discern those Councils to which obedience is due. For how should it be such, when it is very rarely to be had? Now if this means be not sufficient, either some other must be pointed out, which joined or substituted to it may afford this so necessary knowledge to the faithful; or it must be acknowledged, that it is often unknown to which Councils assent is due. But it seemeth incredible to me that God should give to Councils so great and so admirable a privilege as is absolute infallibility, and this to extinguish heresies, compose controversies, and direct the faithful in the way of truth; and all this while should give no certain or easy sign, whereby infallible Councils, from which alone we were to receive so great happiness, might be distinguished from deluding conventicles. For this were to violate his own precept, and hide the brightest candle in the Church under a bushel. Yet hath he given none. At least this approbation of the Church, of which alone we now dispute, cannot be here alleged; since our adversaries have many Councils to which they pretend obedience due, that were not thus approved by the whole Church.

CHAP. XX.

That it cannot be learned from the consent of Doctors what is to be believed. I. Because it doth not appear who those Doctors are. II. Because those Doctors, whosoever they are, do not always agree.

DRIVEN from Pope and Councils, our adversaries fly to the faith of the universal Church. Whether herein they have sure refuge, is next to be inquired. The faith of the universal Church may be taken two ways, either as it is taught by the pastors, or as it is believed by all the faithful, both clergy and laity. Either way taken our adversaries contend it is a certain rule of faith to all private Christians; for that nothing false can either be taught by a common consent of all the pastors, or be believed by all the faithful. But since it is one and the same faith, which is taught by the pastors and believed by the faithful, it might

suffice to consider either of them only, and thence demonstrate that neither can be a rule of faith. Yet that our adversaries may not complain any thing is omitted, I will treat separately of each; and first, that faith cannot be founded upon the common consent of Doctors.

This may be evinced many ways. First, because it doth not appear, who are those Doctors whose consent is required. The whole foundation of this is thought to be a place of St. Paul,* where he asserts that Christ “gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers (doctors), for the edifying of the body of Christ,” &c. But who these pastors and doctors are, is uncertain. It is inquired first, whether the same be pastors that are doctors. St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Isidorus Clarius, Ben. Justinianus, and Lud. Cellotius thought them the same; Hilarius Diaconus, Estius, and Corn. à Lapide different. Next, who are designed by the word pastors? Many understand thereby bishops, and those only; Cellotius† parsons only, and cites Theodoret for his opinion. Estius‡ understands both, who also cites Theophylact. Now these questions are of great moment. For if pastors be the same with doctors, and by both names bishops only be designed, they only must be attended. But if the Apostle understands parsons too, it is not enough to know what bishops teach; we must also inquire what parsons teach. Again, if professors of divinity, and preachers be to be added, we must further search out their doctrine. For if God annexed this privilege of infallibility to the four orders of bishops, parish priests, professors, and preachers taken all together, we must not so follow one order, as to neglect the other. For upon that supposition any one, nay any three of them may err, and truth remain only with the fourth. However it be, it is manifest that both ancients and moderns differ in this point; and that therefore nothing certain can be had therein, much less what is of faith; which yet is necessary to assure us that we have an infallible rule of faith in the governors of the Church.

But neither would that suffice, if it were of faith. Somewhat else would be yet necessary, *viz.* to know certainly whether

* Ephes. iv. 11.

† Recte igitur Theodoretus Pastores et Doctores eos dicit, qui in civitate et in pago erant deputati et segregati. Cell. de Hier. lib. 8. cap. 6.

‡ Dixi præcipue significari Episcopos nomine Pastorum: nam generaliter huic etiam Parochi pertinent. Est. in loc.

to give assent to the doctrine of these pastors and doctors, whosoever they be, it be required that all should consent in their doctrine, every one of them, which they call all mathematically ; or whether the consent of all morally, that is, almost all, will suffice : again, who they are exactly that may be called all morally, and how great a part of the whole may dissent without prejudicing the infallibility of the rest, whether the third, or the fourth, or the tenth, or the hundredth, &c. Who shall define this ? If all mathematically must consent, God would have appointed a rule which never existed ; for so absolute a consent never was among the governors of the Church. But he which shall say, it sufficeth that almost all consent, ought not only to affirm, but also to prove what he says. But how shall so obscure a thing be proved ? Or what certainty can be had in it ? Yet grant it can be had ; it is still to be defined, when almost all can be said to have consented ; for that hath a certain latitude, wherein some men will think that number to be included, which others hold excluded.

But not to seem too scrupulous, let our adversaries define this as they please, and almost all be accounted to have consented, when only a tenth, twelfth, or twentieth part shall dissent. Let all this be as certain as it is indeed doubtful and uncertain, I ask, whether that consent, which it shall have pleased our adversaries to define necessary, is always to be had ? If any one think so, he must be a stranger to all ecclesiastical history, and never have heard of the prevailing heresies of Arius, Nestorius, and Eutyches, not to mention others. But you will say, they were heretics, whereas we require only the consent of catholics. Right ; but it did not sensibly appear they were heretics ; rather that was then the question, who were heretics and who orthodox. For the Arians, Nestorians, and Eutychians took to themselves the name of catholics, and branded the rest with the imputation of heresy. Now if this question, which was certainly a matter of faith, was to be determined only from the consent of doctors, it could never have been determined to the world's end ; since that consent was never to be found. But to deal liberally with our adversaries, have not those often dissented whom themselves acknowledge catholic ? In the second and third age the Asiatics dissented from the Europeans about the celebration of Easter. In the third age, all the Africans, and many of the Asiatics, from the rest, about the re-baptization of heretics. In the fourth age, the followers of Theophilus, Epiphanius, and St.

Jerome, from the favourers of Origen about his condemnation. In the fifth age, the Greek from the Latin Church, upon account of the quarrels between the Roman and Constantinopolitan sees. In the sixth age, the Africans, Dalmatians, and Italians, from the Greeks and Romans, concerning the condemnation of the *Tria Capitula*. In the eighth and ninth ages, the English, French, and Germans, from the Greeks, and many of the Italians, about image-worship. The Eastern had dissented from the Western Church now for many ages about some points of faith and discipline. The Western Church had been divided for these three last ages about the power of Pope and Council. And all these dissensions proceeded even to breaking of communion, and pronouncing anathemas against one another, except the last, which also did no less in the fifteenth age.

Now as often as this happens, to which part can the faithful securely adhere? Think not that the most are then to be followed; for besides that there are not always more patrons of truth than error; and that Canus* and Bannes† expressly deny it; it is impossible to number suffrages, and know which party is most numerous. They might be numbered, perhaps, if the Church were included in one province. But now that it is diffused throughout the whole world, no mean is left of knowing what is the opinion either of all or most. Our adversaries, I suppose, will say, that when the governors of the Church dissent about any matter of faith, the faithful must suspend their assent while the controversy endureth, and content themselves by an implicit faith to believe in it what the Church believeth, not inquiring in the meanwhile what the Church believeth, but leaving that to be inquired by the Church herself.

To this I answer, first, that this grants us all we desire. For we dispute here only of explicit faith, maintaining that our adversaries have no certain foundation for that. If they flee to implicit, they thereby forsake explicit faith. Secondly, almost all our adversaries confess that there are some articles, which even the most ignorant Christians are bound to believe with explicit faith; and Connink‡ asserts the contrary opinion

* Nego, cum de fide agitur, sequi plurimorum judicium oportere. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5. [Lovan. 1569.]

† Non negamus, quin multi, immo plures Sacerdotes et Pastores possint errare. Bann. in 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 10. dub. 3.

‡ De Actib. sup. disp. 4. dub. 9.

of some canonists to be held erroneous and even heretical by the other doctors. Further, all consent there are some points of faith necessary to be believed by all with explicit faith, not only because commanded to be so, but because the explicit belief of them is also the means, without which salvation cannot be obtained. Wherefore Hosius,* in relating the known story of the collier, saith, he did not make that answer, of believing as the Church believeth, before he had entirely repeated the Apostles' Creed, and professed his adherence to it. Now suppose the bishops differ about some article necessary to be believed with explicit faith, as happened in the times of Arianism. Certainly the faithful cannot at that time suspend their assent, if they do not together suspend their hopes of salvation. But not to insist upon that example, suppose a controversy raised about doing somewhat, which God in the Scripture expressly commands to be done, such as we contend to be communion under both kinds, reading the Scripture, &c. What is then to be done? Must all action be suspended? This were to deny obedience to God. We must therefore choose one part, and so reject the pretence of implicit faith. Again, implicit faith is thus expressed, "I believe what the Church believeth." It therefore supposeth the faith of the Church. Of what kind? not implicitly surely. For that would be absurd in the highest degree. Certainly then the Church could not justly be accounted the keeper of tradition, which is nothing else in our adversaries' sense, but that doctrine which Christ delivered to his Apostles, they to their successors, until it was derived down to us. If this be true, the Church of every age must of necessity distinctly and explicitly know that doctrine. Otherwise it cannot faithfully and accurately deliver it to the succeeding Church. Then how shall this faith of the Church herself be expressed? It can be by no other form than this, "I believe what I believe;" than which nothing can be more absurd. But I need not refute a folly which our adversaries do not espouse, as appears from the words of Duval:† "although some things were in process of time defined by the Church,

* Hos. contra Prol. Brent. lib. 3.

† Quamvis aliqua successu temporis fuerint in Ecclesia definita, de quibus antea citra hæresin dubitabatur, certum tamen est illa fuisse semper a nonnullis prædicata et declarata. Quod autem ab aliis non crederentur, istud tantum vel ex oblivione vel ex ignorantia Scripturæ aut traditionis proveniebat. Duval. in 2. 2. p. 111.

which were before doubted of without the crime of heresy, yet it is certain they were always preached and declared by some. But that they were not believed by others, arose either from the forgetfulness, or from the ignorance of Scripture or tradition."

Is it therefore this explicit faith of the Church, which serveth as a foundation to implicit faith? So it ought to be, and so I doubt not but our adversaries will say it is. But in this case, wherein the governors of the Church dissent about an article of faith, it cannot be. For that which the Church explicitly believes is no definite opinion, but a mere contradiction repugnant to itself, and destroying itself. For one part of the Church believeth the opinion, whereof the controversy is raised, to be true, wholesome, and revealed by God; the other part believes it false, pernicious, and suggested by men. Now, to have the belief of the whole Church, you must join both parts of the contradiction together: and so the Church believeth that opinion to be true and false, wholesome and pernicious, revealed by God, and suggested by men. But this is not faith, but a deformed monster, consisting of contrary and repugnant parts.

CHAP. XXI.

That the consent of Doctors, even when it can be had, is more difficult to be known, than that we can by the help of it attain to the knowledge of the Truth.

To what we observed in the precedent chapter our adversaries may perhaps answer, that when the governors of the Church differ about a matter to be believed, then indeed the faith of private Christians cannot rely upon their authority; but that this dissent is not perpetual, that they oftentimes consent in delivering the doctrine of the Church, and then at least may be securely believed in what they teach. To this I reply, first, that hereby they must grant they have no certain and fixed rule of faith for many great and weighty points of religion, contrary to their continual boasts of the abundance of rules whereby God hath provided for all the necessities of his Church. Secondly, the governors of the Church have now for many ages differed about some matters, upon which, according to our adversaries, depend the hopes of eternal salvation.

For example, whether the true Church is to be found among the Greeks or among the Latins? For of the five patriarchates of the Church, four are divided from the Church of Rome, and accuse her of heresy and schism, both which accusations she retorts upon them. Now, this is a matter of great moment, which may be justly doubted of, and can never be determined by the consent of doctors.

But to omit that, this consent, if it could be had, is not so manifest and obvious as a rule of faith ought necessarily to be ; which by the confession of all must be clear, evident, and easy to be applied. This Duval* assigns for "an essential condition of a rule of faith," and acknowledgeth, "that if a rule obscurely proposeth the mysteries of faith, it would thereby become no rule." And for this reason our adversaries so much exaggerate the obscurity of Scripture, that they may thereby shew it could not be given by God for a rule of faith. To which end Gr. à Valentia† layeth down this axiom, which he afterwards applieth to the Scripture: "The sentence of that authority which is to judge of all matters of faith, ought to be manifest, that it may be easily understood by all the faithful. For if that authority doth not teach perspicuously and plainly, it will be of no use to that end." So he, and with him many others. If therefore I shall shew, that the consent of pastors about matters of belief is so obscure and difficult to be known, that even the most learned, much more illiterate men cannot avoid error in searching it out ; I shall thereby prove, that it could not be given to us by God as a common rule of things to be believed.

This obscurity and difficulty ariseth from three causes. The first is the amplitude of the Church diffused throughout the whole world ; which permits not the faith of all pastors to be known, unless we travel through all those regions, wherein they are dispersed. For it sufficeth not to consult a few. They may be mistaken. The opinion of all must be asked, the consent of all appear. But how shall they all be singly

* *Secunda conditio, eaque pariter essentialis, est perspicuitas. Nam si hæc regula obscure fidei mysteria proponeret, regula fidei non foret.* Duval in 2. 2. p. 207.

† *Sententiam ejus autoritatis, ejus de rebus omnibus fidei judicium est, apertam oportet esse, ut ab omnibus fidelibus commode possit intelligi. Nam si non ita perspicue et plane autoritas illa doceat, non ad eam rem valebit.* Val. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. sect. 4. [Mogunt. 1591.]

consulted? Whoever learned the Christain faith this way? Yet this way Cardinal Richelieu* points out to us. He saith, the uniformity of the Church is manifest to sense; that all parts of the Church may be surveyed by one man at divers times, or by divers men at one time. True; but to reduce this to practice, every single man must take so many journeys, send out so many intelligencers; that this method cannot be persuaded but in jest. Valentia,† the Jesuit, is more ingenuous, who confesseth, “that it can rarely happen that it may be sufficiently known what is the opinion in religion of all doctors living at the same time.” And this he understands in respect of the Pope himself, as appears from what follows these words. If then the consent of doctors can rarely be known by the Pope, who hath his nuncios and emissaries in all places, how shall it ever be known by private men? Tanner‡ saith the same thing, as he is cited by Martinonus. “If it were necessary,” saith he, “that all private men should know evidently what is believed in the whole Church, how many years must be spent in acquiring that evidence, which even learned men have not always?” And Martinonus§ saith, “the Pope may be certainly and easily consulted, not so the whole Church, no, not all her pastors only.”

This may be proved by many examples, of which I will produce some few. Bellarmine|| and Valentia¶ assert, that all divines agree concerning the punishment of infants dying without baptism, and think it only *pœna damni* undergone in that which they call the *limbus puerorum*. Yet is this opinion falsely by them ascribed to all, even by modern divines (for among the ancients St. Fulgentius is known to have taught the contrary).

* Method. liv. 1. chap. 14.

† Fatendum est raro accidere posse, ut quæ sit doctorum omnium uno tempore viventium de religione sententia satis cognoscatur. Val. ubi supr. sect. 46.

‡ Si opus esset, ut plebeii scirent evidenter in tota Ecclesia sic credi; quot anni laborerent, dum istam evidentiam acquirerent, quam neque periti semper habent? Tann. apud Mart. de Fide, disp. 3. sect. 4.

§ Certo et facile potest consuli Pontifex, non sic tota Ecclesia, ne quidem omnes illius Pastores. Mart. de Fide, disp. 9. sect. 9.

|| Bell. de Amiss. Stat. lib. 5. cap. 6. [Dicimus parvulos sine baptismo decedentes, dolorem animi habituros quod intelligent se beatudine privatos a consortio piorum fratrum et parentum alienos, in carcerem inferni detrusos et in tenebris perpetuis vitam acturos. Lib. vi. cap. 6. p. 203—205. Prag. 1721.]

¶ Val. tom. 4. disp. 11. quæst. 1. punct. 1. sect. 3. omnes Theologi, universa Theologorum Schola.

Florentius Conrius, titular archbishop of Tuam, published a book, wherein he endeavoured to prove the contrary, approved by fourteen doctors of divinity ; whereof one Fr. Sylvius testifieth Conrius's opinion is the common doctrine of the school of Douay : another, James Pollet, professeth, that for thirty years, wherein he had been conversant in the divinity schools, he had never heard any other opinion taught by the professors, than that unbaptized infants are condemned to the eternal torments of hell. A third, H. Rampen,* professor of Douay, saith, that "he had always judged that opinion, being St. Augustine's, to be truest, defended and taught it as more consonant to the ancient doctors, and always even to this day taught by some most excellent persons, being founded upon Scripture and Councils."

Of indulgences our adversaries teach chiefly three things. I. That there is a treasure of the satisfaction of Christ and the saints, which may be applied to persons liable to suffer the punishment of their sins, after the guilt of them is remitted in the sacrament of penance ; and that this treasure is actually applied by indulgences granted by the Pope. II. That the souls in purgatory may be helped by these indulgences. III. That by them is remitted not only the punishment enjoined in penance, and decreed by the canons of the Church, but also that which is due at the tribunal of God. These three things Bellarmine and Valentia affirm to be taught by all divines. Although the first, Bellarmine confesseth, was doubted of by Mairo and Durandus, who thought the satisfaction of saints hath no part in that treasure ; but the contrary, saith he, "is the common opinion of the other divines, as well ancient, as of all the modern,"† and was confirmed by a decree of Clement VI. The second he acknowledgeth was denied by Hostiensis and Gabriel ; but saith, the latter corrected his error, and that "it is a thing most certain and undoubted among Catholics." So Valentia‡ saith, it is the assertion of all the orthodox. As for the third, Valentia affirms the contrary opinion is exploded as

* Quam S. Augustini sententiam verissimam semper judicavi, defendi et docui tanquam antiquioribus Ecclesiæ doctoribus conformem, et semper hucusque ab excellentissimis quibusdam edoctam, utpote Scripturis magis innixam et Conciliis.

† Communis aliorum Theologorum tum antiquorum tum recentiorum omnium sententia. Bell. de Indulg. lib. 1. cap. 2. Res certissima, et apud Catholicos indubitata.

‡ Val. tom. 4. disp. 7. quæst. 20. punct. 5. [Lugd. 1591.]

erroneous by all the orthodox. Who could imagine after all this there were any doubt concerning these points among them? Yet Holden* teacheth that this only is certain and undoubted, that the governors of the Church can and ought sometimes to indulge something, and mitigate the severity of the canons in each tribunal. "All the rest are doubtful, and disputed of by divines on both parts, to wit, whether there be a treasure, of which the Pope and other pastors of the Church are dispensers," &c. where he largely shews that all these propositions are many ways doubted of, and wholly uncertain among divines.

If it be inquired, whether the Church can put heretics to death? Valentia† answers, that "it is not only certain, but of faith, that the Church can lawfully and conveniently do it." Holden,‡ on the contrary, maintains, "that to inflict death upon convicted, relapsed, or even the most obstinate heretics, was never an opinion of the Christian religion and the universal Church. Neither do all, even the most pious and learned Catholics, approve the use and methods of the Inquisition." The like saith Richerius.§ If again it be inquired, whether the corruption of human nature, introduced by sin, consists only in the loss of supernatural graces, or also includes somewhat positive, whereby the soul is vitiated? Rhodius|| answers in the first sense, and affirms, "that all the orthodox divines so teach against all sectaries." Bellarmine,¶ "that it is taught by the common consent of all." Yet Vasquez** attributes the contrary opinion to many divines of great name, as Holcot, Greg. Ariminensis, Gabriel, Henricus, Gulielmus Parisiensis, Autissiodorensis, Driedo.

It is a famous question, whether the Pope, besides the spiritual power, commonly attributed to him, hath a power over temporals, either direct or indirect, whereby he deposes princes for heresy, or any other crime, and absolves their subjects from their

* *Cætera omnia dubia sunt, et à Theologis in utramque partem agitata.* Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 2. cap. 6.

† *Ex fide certum est Ecclesiam licite et convenienter id facere posse.* Val. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 11. punct. 3. [ut supra.]

‡ *Nunquam fuit religionis Christianæ et Ecclesiæ Christianæ dogma Catholicum. Nec omnes etiam piissimi et doctissimi Catholici inquisitionis usum et rationem approbant.* Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 1. cap. 9.

§ *Rich. Hist. Concil. lib. 1. cap. 10.*

|| *Ita contra sectarios omnes docent Orthodoxi omnes Theologi.* Rhod. de Pecc. disp. 4. quæst. 2. sect. 3.

¶ *Omnes communi consensu docent.* Bell. de Grat. primi hom. cap. 5.

** *Vasq. 1, 2. disp. 132. cap. 4. et 5.*

allegiance. There are three opinions about this. The first is, that the Pope hath, *jure divino*, a direct and absolute power over the whole world, as well in temporals as in spirituals. The second, that the Pope, as Pope, hath no temporal power, nor any authority to deprive princes. The third, that the Pope, as Pope, hath not directly any temporal, but only spiritual power; yet that by means of that spiritual, he hath indirectly a supreme power even in temporals. Bellarmine* who relateth these three opinions in these very words, attributes the first to many of the canonists; the third he makes the common opinion of Catholic divines. The second he saith is not so much an opinion as a heresy, and therefore he ascribes it only to Calvin, P. Martyr, Brentius, and the Magdeburgenses: and in another place, under the feigned name of Adolphus Schulkenius, he teacheth the same thing, where he inveigheth† against Widdrington (a defender of the second opinion) as “opposing the holy Scriptures, the doctrine of Councils and Popes, and the unanimous consent of fathers and doctors, who all with one mouth teach the Pope’s supreme power in temporals; and thereby ranking himself with heretics and schismatics, while he pretends to be a Catholic.” Thus Bellarmine. Now on the other side, De Marca and Launoy contend this opinion was always unknown in France. The whole Sorbon in the exposition of their judgment published in the year 1663 testify, that only they never received this opinion, but always resisted it with their utmost power. Not to say, that the Kings of France, and Parliaments of Paris by their edicts and arrests often condemned it, and forbid it to be held or taught, particularly in the years 1561, 1594, 1595, 1610, 1614, &c.

I might produce many more examples; but these suffice to shew, that the greatest doctors mistake in imagining some opinions to be approved by all the divines of their communion, which yet are freely disputed of on both sides. And if this happens to doctors, who employ their whole time in matters of learning, what shall we think of poor and illiterate men, who know little beyond the providing for the necessities of this life? Again, if the judgment of only those doctors, who

* Bell. de Pont. lib. 5. cap. 1. [p. 498. ut supra.]

† Contra S. literas, doctrinam conciliorum et summorum pont. unanimem consensum patrum et doctorum hæreticis schismaticisque jungit. Apud Widd. contra Schulk. sect. 15.

commit their opinions to writing, and are very few in comparison of the rest, is not certainly known; how shall we know the judgment of those who teach their flocks *viva voce*? Lastly, if their opinion be true, who would have the judgment not only of bishops, but also of parsons, professors of divinity, and preachers to be accounted of; what hope is there, that the opinion of so many men should ever be known to any one man, or to any but God alone?

The second reason of the difficulty of knowing the common consent of other doctors, is the obscure knowledge which is in the Church, of some points, concerning which no disputation hath been yet raised. For nothing is more true, than that opinions are illustrated by controversies. So St. Augustine saith, "Many things pertaining to catholic faith, while they are disputed of by the cunning perverseness of heretics, that they may be defended against them, are considered more diligently, understood more clearly, and preached more earnestly; the question moved by the adversary becoming an occasion of learning."* This he proves in another place† by the doctrines of the Trinity, penance and baptism, not fully handled before the controversies started in them by the Arians, Novatians, and Rebaptizers: and therefore Valentia affirms, "It belongs to the Church, as necessity shall require, to deliver anew to the faithful more explicitly, and by an infallible authority, as it were drawn out of darkness those truths of faith, which were indeed at first delivered by the Apostles; but now either by the negligence or perversity of men lay hid. And perhaps," saith he, "some do yet lie hid in the Church."‡ An eminent example of this appeared in the Council of Trent; when they were seeking out an efficacious remedy against the inconveniences of clandestine marriages. Some advise the declaring them void for the future; and these were the major number. Fifty bishops, and among them the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and two of the legates, Cardinal Hosius and Simonetta, opposed it, saying, "That it was not in the power of the Council."

* Multa ad fidem Catholicam pertinentia, dum hæreticorum callida inquietudine agitantur, ut adversum eos defendi possint, et considerantur diligentius, et intelliguntur clarius, et instantius prædicantur, et ab adversario mota quæstio existit discendi occasio. August. de Civit. Dei, lib. 16. chap. 20.

† In Psalm 34.

‡ Val. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 6. Et fortasse latent adhuc in Ecclesia aliqua.

Morone the legate, and many others, suspended their votes. The disputations grew high ; at last they agreed to refer all to the Pope. He answered, the Council had power to make such a decree, and that it ought to be made. Hereupon clandestine marriages were declared void ; and an anathema added to the decree against all those who should thenceforth deny the Church hath power to make constitutions of that nature. See a power residing in the Church now become an article of faith, which was vehemently impugned by a patriarch, two legates, fifty bishops, and doubted of by many others. And shall those now be heard, who maintain there is always in the Church a clear and distinct knowledge of all things revealed ?

We proceed to the third reason, which consisteth in this, that some opinions are often divulged in the Church as revealed by God, and approved by the Church, and are every where taught, which at last are found out and known to be false. Monsieur Pajon* produceth three eminent examples of this observation ; the first taken from the decisions of the Canonists ; the second from the form of condemnation of the five Jansenian propositions ; the third from the prohibition of reading the Bible ; which because he largely and accurately pursueth, I will not here urge ; much less will add other examples before pointed out in this chapter. However, from what hath been said, it appears, that it is obscure and difficult to be known wherein the doctors consent. This will be more manifest, if we consider, that it is far more difficult to know certainly what all the present doctors teach, than what the former doctors taught. For the opinions of these we have in their books, which we can read at home ; but to know the judgment of the others we must travel through the world. Valentia supposeth this very thing, where he giveth the reason why the Popes in defining rather maketh use of dead than living doctors : “ Because,” saith he, “ the opinion of these latter can very rarely be sufficiently known. For being dispersed through the whole Church, they cannot all easily be either assembled, or asked what they think ; whereas the ancient doctors are more famous, and are not so many.”† If this be true, how difficult must it be to know the judgment of the present Church ; since the most learned men can very hardly

* Rép. aux préjugés, part. 2. chap. 2.

† Qui proinde omnes nec facile congregari nec interrogari possunt quid sentiant. Val. tom. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. sect. 46. [Lugd. 1591.]

obtain the sense of the ancient Church? Few or none can search all the monuments of antiquity, pry into the most secret recesses of it, and turn over the writings of sixteen ages; and in all this long journey make no slips, commit no errors: yet is all this easier in the judgment of Valentia, than to inquire and find out the opinion of the doctors living at any one time; which yet must be done by them, who lay the foundation of their faith upon their consent.

I have not yet seen any of our adversaries, who offereth the least solution of any one of these difficulties, except Cardinal Richelieu; who when he had objected to himself, that blind men hear neither all preachers and doctors, nor learn from those which they do hear, what the others teach; which is our very argument, except that what he saith only of blind men, we justly apply to all men; he answers, "That as for a philosopher to conclude all fires to be hot, it is not necessary that he experiments all the fires in the world, the common consent of philosophers sufficing. So to know certainly, whether any doctrine be the doctrine of the Church, it abundantly sufficeth, that blind men hear it proposed by divers doctors of the Church, and that it cannot be shewn there are others who teach the contrary."*

But many things may be here observed. First, those things do not always suffice in matters of faith, with which we are contented in disputing. There we often argue from concessions, which we own to be false. Here nothing is to be produced but what is true and certain. Wherefore if nobody oppose those doctrines which seem true to us, it doth not follow that we ought to admit them, unless they be both certain of themselves, and appear so to us. And if nobody points out to us any maintainers of the contrary doctrine, it doth not therefore follow that there are none; whence the doctrine proposed, obtains not thence any certainty, any motive of faith. Secondly, philosophers themselves admonish, great diligence is to be used in making arguments of induction, such as this; and that an insufficient enumeration of particulars is the great fountain of errors; while a few, or even many, are reckoned up, and thence a conclusion made of all. Wherefore he reasons not well, who argues thus, such and such teach thus; nor doth any appear who opposeth, therefore all teach the same. For it may easily be that many may teach other-

* Method. liv. 2. chap. 8.

wise, unknown to him who reasons thus, but well known to others.

In the next place, it were to be desired the Cardinal had explained his mind more clearly, and told by whom he means it cannot be shewn that others teach the contrary; whether by the blind man himself, or by other blind or ignorant men like himself, or by one learned man whom he should consult, or by all learned men every where dispersed. If he means the first or second, then he greatly errs in thinking it sufficient that the blind man or other ignorant persons of his acquaintance cannot name any, who teach a contrary doctrine to their parish priest or those doctors whom they hear. For all the husbandmen, labourers, and mechanics of the parish may be easily ignorant, that a contrary doctrine, and that more true, is taught in America or India, or even the next province; and so the blind man shall be obliged to believe a falsity. But if the Cardinal means it sufficeth, that the blind man consult some learned man to know whether none teacheth contrary to his parson; I would ask, whether our adversary requireth it as necessary? If so, then all the common sort of the faithful are guilty of rashness and imprudence. For I dare swear that none of them ever puts this in practice. If he saith it is not necessary, he deserts the cause. For upon what foundation shall their faith rely, who do not that which he confesseth not necessary to be done, and yet thinks sufficient to confirm their faith? But what if the doctor, who is consulted, be in the same error with the parish priest, as none will deny he easily may? It cannot be imagined that doctor will tell the consuler the thing is not taught by the Church, which himself thinks to belongs to faith. Or what if that doctor be ignorant that others, and those learned men teach the contrary; as we proved might easily happen in the precedent chapter? That answer surely cannot be sufficient to ground faith upon, which can be false. For, as Martinonus truly saith, "To believe with undoubting and infallible faith, such is divine faith, is required an infallible argument."* Lastly, that the Cardinal meaneth it sufficeth that none in the world can shew the parson teacheth what is repugnant to others, I can never be induced to believe, since a more foolish sense could not be invented. For not the most sagacious person, much less a blind man, could make so

* *Ad credendum fide indubitata et infallibili, qualis est fides divina, requiritur argumentum infallibile. Mart. de Disp. 3. sect. 4.*

diligent an inquiry as to be assured that none such can be found in the whole world. Add hereto, that it is not more difficult to know directly whether any do teach otherwise, than to know whether there be any who can shew that it is any where taught otherwise: and so all our former arguments will return with their full force against this answer. But to omit all this, I ask whether any ignorant person using such diligence to inquire whether what is taught by his parson, is taught unanimously by all the other governors of the Church, as can be expected from a man of his circumstances and capacity, can be deceived therein? If he cannot, all those learned men whom I mentioned in the last chapter will be guilty of a most intolerable negligence and supinity, as being mistaken in that, wherein even the most ignorant cannot be deceived. If he can, then he is not certain, and therefore hath no faith. For faith must be certain.

CHAP. XXII.

That it doth not suffice it be known that any thing is taught unanimously by the Governors of the Church, unless it appear that it is taught to be of Faith. But that this is most uncertain.

FROM what hath been said it is manifest, that neither do the governors of the Church always consent; nor if they do, can their consent be certainly known. But suppose both: the controversy is not yet ended. For not whatsoever they unanimously affirm, is to be received as the revelation of God, and the doctrine of the Church; but only what they unanimously maintain to be of faith, This Canus and Bellarmine plainly insinuate: the first,* when he saith, “the pastors of the Church cannot err in the faith, but whatsoever they teach the faithful people, that it belongs to the faith of Christ, is most true:” Bellarmine:† “that whatsoever all the bishops teach as belonging to faith, is necessarily true and of faith.” Therefore, Flor. Conrius defends himself against the unanimous consent of doctors, who taught 500 years since that

* Quidquid fidelem populum docent, quod ad Christi fidem attineat. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 4. cap. 4.

† Id quod docent [omnes episcopi] tanquam ad fidem pertinens. [necessario est verum et de fide.] Bell. de Eccl. lib. 3. cap. 14. [p. 88. vol. 2. Prag. 1721.]

unbaptized infants were not punished with the torments of fire, by pretending that "they did not teach or propose this as of faith."* And indeed it cannot but be absurd, that the consent of pastors should reach farther than the infallibility of Pope, or Council, or the universal Church, which as we have before observed, is acknowledged not to take place, but in matters which they propose as of faith. Lastly, the Council of Trent, Pius V. and divers provincial Councils wished, that the Catechism of Trent might be admitted every where, and be used by all pastors in the instruction of their people. Perhaps this is observed: for why should it not be! This whole book then may be reckoned among those things which all pastors propose to their flocks, not as pertaining to faith, but as true and wholesome. If therefore, whatsoever all propose, must necessarily be true; there can be nothing false, nothing uncertain in this book. Yet none will deny there are taught in it many propositions false, more uncertain, and none which might not safely be denied, if they received not their authority from some other fountain. Wherefore it is nowhere admitted as of infallible authority; a manifest argument, that those things may be false, which are not taught as of faith, although taught unanimously.

Before we believe therefore the doctrine of the governors of the Church, we must consider how they teach it, whether as of faith; if not, we must suspend our assent. Now bishops, parsons, and preachers, are wont to teach what seems true to them, and agreeing with divine revelation; but very rarely to admonish whether what they teach be of faith, or a consequent of faith, whether expressly revealed, or coherent to things revealed. This Holden acknowledgeth. "We never heard," saith he,† "that the Church in delivering the Christian doctrine, exhibited or composed a catalogue of revealed articles and divine institutions, whereby those articles of divine faith might be separately and distinctly known from all others, which are either of ecclesiastical institution, or not immediately

* Non tanquam fidem docuerint aut proposuerint. *Con. de Statu parv. cap. 19.*

† In *Doctrina Christiana tradenda nunquam audivimus Ecclesiam articulorum revelatorum et divinarum institutionum Catalogum exhibuisse vel composuisse, quo separatim et distincte cognosci possent hujusmodi fidei dogmata ab aliis omnibus, quæ vel Ecclesiasticæ sunt institutionis, vel certe quæ revelationi divinæ haud immediate innitantur; atque adeo omnia simul confuse et indistincte docuisse.* *Hold. Anal. fid. lib. 1. cap. 8.*

founded upon divine revelation, but taught altogether confusedly and indistinctly." Hence even those divines who agree in the truth of any article, often differ in judging whether it be of faith; as we saw before concerning the supreme power of the Pope. Wherefore Holden affirms there are much fewer articles of divine and catholic faith, than divines commonly think; and therefore bestows the whole latter part of his analysis, in composing a catalogue of such articles: which would indeed have been very useful, if it were received by all. But he hath omitted some things, which others contend to be of faith; and inserted others, which some would have omitted. Further, in this matter, I appeal to the experience of all persons; who if they shall ask any of our adversaries what the Church teacheth concerning image worship, invocation of saints, or the like, will be convinced by their different answers, that it is not easy to say what the Church teacheth. And if this be difficult to learned men, how shall it be possible to ignorant persons?

Our adversaries cannot justly pretend, as many of them do, that the doctors may dissent in those things, which are of theological, not divine right, and belong rather to the schools than to the pulpit, without either the knowledge or the damage of the people; but cannot dissent in matters of faith, unless their dissensions be presently known, because disputations, strifes and schisms presently arise from them, which occasion either the decree of a Pope or the calling of a Council to extinguish the dissension, and cast the heretical part out of the Church. That every laic therefore, both may and ought to be persuaded of the truth of those things, which his pastor teacheth to be of faith, while he seeth none opposing him; although himself doth not inquire, whether others teach the same thing. So Suarez.* But here many things are supposed which cannot be granted. First, it is not necessary, that as often as a doctor proposeth any thing to be of faith, which is not so, some others should rise to oppose him. We daily see the contrary not only in parishes, but even in universities, where the wits of men are more easily excited to controversy; yet there some affirm, others deny many matters to be of faith, without any subsequent schisms or animosities.

Secondly, If any disputation, or opposition should arise herein, it is not necessary it should ever come to the ears of the common people. Every one knows how hot the controversy about

* De Fide, Disp. 5. sect. 1. [Mogunt. 1619.]

the Pope's infallibility hath for some ages been, especially in France, where are many defenders of each opinion. Yet some years since, when I was in that country, talking with a priest, and him no ordinary person, but a man famous in the neighbourhood, and doctor of divinity, when I said the Pope's infallibility was denied by many, and particularly by the Sorbon, he grew very angry, said it was most false, and confidently maintained that no catholic divine ever doubted of it. Nor could I free the man from his error, whatever I then offered to him. See another example more remarkable. I was present at Paris in an assembly of learned men, who met weekly to treat of matters of learning. They then disputed of the Pope's infallibility, which a priest said was lately rejected by the Gallican clergy in their Synod. At that an abbot who presided over the assembly, and had the repute of a very learned man, was not a little moved, and denied any such thing was ever done by the clergy. He acknowledged indeed that the Pope could err, whensoever he gave his opinion as a private doctor, and that the clergy meant no more than this : but that there was no catholic, who did not hold his judgment infallible whensoever he pronounced *ex cathedrâ* : and whatsoever the priest could say, he would not be persuaded that there was any dissension among divines in this matter. If this learned abbot could be ignorant of so notorious a thing ; what shall we think of illiterate Christians ?

Thirdly, It is not necessary, that as often as dissensions arise in matters of faith, schism should thence immediately be produced, and occasion a decree of the Pope, or calling of a Council. How many things did Theodorus of Mopsuestia teach against the faith, which yet were not canvassed of many years after his death ? All acknowledge the number of canonical books of Scripture, the necessity of the eucharist, and state of the dead to be of faith : yet none will deny the ancients differed in judgment as to all these things ; and all know that no schisms, disputes, or anathemas of Councils arose therefrom. But not to depart from this very question, what can be more of faith, than the rule of faith itself, and the most essential conditions of that rule, infallibility ? Many doctors of the Church denied this in the fourteenth and fifteenth ages, as we before proved ; yet no schism, no decree of the Church was occasioned thereby.

But to shew the sophistry of this objection more evidently, it may be observed, that there are five sorts of things, which,

although not belonging to faith, may be in the Church proposed as of faith. I. Things true, but not revealed. II. Neither true nor revealed, but not repugnant to revelation. III. Repugnant to things revealed, but such, as it is not manifest that they were revealed. IV. Repugnant to things manifestly revealed, but so as that repugnance is obscure and remote, not clear and immediate. V. Clearly repugnant to things manifestly revealed. Concerning matters of the last rank this objection might have some force, but not much, since the contrary may be shewn in some examples. But for the four first classes it hath no colour of truth. They may be all taught as of faith, and that daily, yet be observed and regarded by none, much less violently opposed by any. The want of apparent opposition, therefore, sufficeth not to make what any one doctor proposeth as of faith, to be so. The consent and concurrence of all in teaching the same to be of faith, must be ascertained. Otherwise assent to it will be foolish and rash, at least uncertain.

CHAP. XXIII.

*That it is not certain those things are true, which are
unanimously taught by all Pastors.*

THAT it is uncertain, what the governors of the Church unanimously teach, we have proved ; yet grant it certain : can we securely believe this their unanimous consent ? What if they may all err ? This our adversaries will say, they cannot. But is that certain and undoubted ? If not, in vain is it alleged. They will perhaps say it is ; nay, and of faith, so as it cannot be denied without open heresy. So Duval,* and many others. And indeed, if it be not of faith that all the pastors consenting cannot err, faith cannot rely upon their authority. Yet is this most false ; for we before proved these two propositions : I. That nothing is of faith, whose contrary is held and taught by Catholic divines, the Church knowing and not censuring their opposition. II. That the greatest divines of the Roman Church, doctors, bishops, and cardinals taught : 1. That the whole clergy might be infected with heresy. 2. That the Church, to which infallibility was promised,

* In 2. 2. p. 106.

might consist in one laic, or one woman, the rest apostatizing from the faith. This was the opinion of Alensis, the author of the Gloss upon the Decretals, Lyra, Occam, Alliaco, Panormitan, Turrecremata, Peter de Monte, S. Antoninus, Cusanus, Clemangis, Jacobatius, J. Fr. Picus. But who can imagine so many, and so great men, either not to have known what is of faith, or wilfully to have taught the contrary?

This moved Suarez to esteem the infallibility of the pastors thus consenting uncertain. "It is asked," saith he,* "whether all the bishops of the Church can agree in any error? For among Catholics, some affirm it, because there is no promise found (of the contrary): others deny it, because the whole Church would be otherwise in great danger of error. To me neither seemeth sufficiently certain. Yet it is probable, that it becomes the providence of Christ not to permit it." In these words two things may be observed. First, That Suarez speaks of the infallibility of bishops not in believing, but in teaching. For he saith this in answer to an objection, that if all the bishops could err, then the other part of the Church, the laity might also err, because they ordinarily follow the doctrine of their pastors, and are bound to do it. Now the people are bound to follow their pastors, not in what they think, but in what they teach. This also appears from the reason why some denied the consent of all bishops in any error to be possible, because, if that should happen, the whole Church would be brought into great danger of error. But if bishops should teach rightly, although they thought erroneously, there would be thence no danger of error to the rest of the faithful. Secondly, of this infallibility of bishops in what they teach unanimously, he saith three things. 1. That some Catholics deny it. 2. That neither part seems certain to him. 3. That it is probable. All which singly prove, that he thought it not to be of faith. But who can imagine so great a doctor could be ignorant of what was of faith?

* *Petitur an omnes Episcopi Ecclesiæ possint convenire in aliquo errore. Nam inter Catholicos quidam affirmant, quia non invenitur promisso. Alij negant, quia, &c. Mihi vero neutrum videtur satis exploratum: probabile autem est ad providentiam Christi pertinere, ut id non permittat. Suar. de Fide, Disp. 5. sect. 6. [Mogunt. 1619.]*

† *Ut, seposito capite visibili, membra omnia possint infici aliquo errore materiali, vix potest contingere; et verisimillimum est Deo semper cordi futurum ne id accadat. Si tamen accideret, incontaminato capite, nihil decederet de perpetuitate veræ fidei in Ecclesia. Rayn. αὐτὸς ἔφα, punct. 5.*

Theoph. Raynaudus differed not much from the opinion of Suarez : "That the visible head," saith he,* "being laid aside, all the members should be infected with any material error, could scarce happen ; and it is most probable God will take care it should not. Yet if it should happen, the head being uninfected, the perpetuity of true faith in the Church would suffer no loss." Where he determines not absolutely this cannot happen ; but looks on the contrary only as most probable ; and denieth the infallibility of the whole Church to depend thereon, which is so much urged by the maintainers of the contrary opinion. Rhodius speaks more plainly, who affirms,† "that the Pope being dead, the Church hath no infallible authority to make decrees of faith, as having no actual and immediate infallibility at that time."

Hence is manifest, that we want little of a confession from our adversaries, that the infallibility of the governors of the Church is not of faith. And indeed it cannot be. For no foundation of such a faith is to be found : not Scripture or tradition. For not to say, that these, to make any article become of faith, ought, according to our adversaries, most evidently to contain it ; which evidence even they will not deny to be here wanting : it would be most absurd, that Papists should believe this infallibility of the pastors of the Church for the authority of Scripture or tradition ; when they believe neither of these, but for the authority of the pastors. Take away their testimony, and they will deny it to be known whether Scripture or tradition be the word of God, or what is the sense of either. The same may be said of the decrees of the Church representative. For besides that no such express decree of it can be produced, the infallibility of the representative Church itself is believed by every single Papist, only because they hear it taught by their pastors. As for the belief of the universal Church, that ought not to be produced. For that is the thing now inquired, why the universal Church believeth so ?

Will our adversaries therefore say, they believe their pastors cannot err in teaching unanimously what is of faith ; because they teach so themselves ? This they must recur to ; for they have no other reason of believing so : yet nothing can be more absurd. For, first, it is the constant opinion of all mankind,

* *Mortuo pontifice, non est in Ecclesia ulla infallibilis autoritas ad condenda fidei decreta.*—Nullam eo tempore infallibilitatem actualem et proximam habet Ecclesia. Rhod. de Fide, quæst. 2. sect. 5. §. 5.

and a received law among all nations, that none should be witness or judge in his own cause. Secondly, as we believe not any man to be true and honest, till we be assured of his veracity and honesty from some other testimony than his own : so it would be the highest imprudence to esteem those infallible, who challenge that privilege to themselves ; until their infallibility be known to us from some other argument than their own testimony. Certainly our adversaries will not permit even the Scripture, which is the word of God, and hath so many illustrious characters of a divine original, to be believed for its own testimony ; and Christ openly professed, that if he bore witness of himself, his witness was not credible. Why then shall that be attributed to the governors of the Church, which Christ denied to himself, and our adversaries deny to the word of God ? Thirdly, the question will return, whence the pastors of the Church know that they cannot err ? For they will not say, they know it because the faithful believe it ; since as Hallier well saith,* “the pastors do not therefore teach truly, because the auditors believe truly ; but the auditors believe truly, because they assent to the pastors teaching truly.” They cannot say, that they know it from Scripture or tradition. For the truth of these, without the authority of the Church, is no more known to learned than to unlearned persons. “Think not,” saith Bagotius,† “that any one, even the most learned divine, can believe any thing without the authority of the Church, and independently from it.” And Hosius‡ goeth so far, that he maintains it to be the best way, that even the most learned men should recur to implicit faith, and believe only in general as the Church believeth. Shall the pastors therefore believe that they cannot err for their own testimony ? This is the natural consequence of our adversaries doctrine, and that most absurd. For, first, there is none of the pastors which believeth so, because he teacheth so ; but all teach so, because all believe so. Again, the question will recur upon what foundation do they teach so ? Here either nothing, or only this must be answered, that they teach so because they

* Non ideo vera docent Pastores, quia vera credunt auditores : sed ideo vera credunt auditores, quid vera docentibus assentiuntur. F. Hallier de Hierarch. lib. 4. cap. 2.

† Cave existimes unumquenkum, etiam Theologum Doctissimum, posse quicquam credere sine autoritate Ecclesiæ et independenter ab ea. Bagot. Instit. Theol. lib. 4. cap. 1. §. 1.

‡ Hos. cont. Brent.

believe so. Then if you ask why they believe so? no other answer can be given, than because they believe so; which is so foolish, as that I need not urge it any farther.

CHAP. XXIV.

That the Faith of all single Christians cannot rely upon the Faith of the universal Church; because, first, it appears not who belong to that Church, which is thought infallible.

THUS far have we considered the faith of the universal Church, as it is taught by the pastors or clergy. It remains that we treat of it as it is believed both by clergy and laity; which is the last refuge of our adversaries. Here I undertake to prove, that there is nothing whereon the faith of all private Christians can less rely; and that for three reasons. 1. Because it doth not appear what is that universal Church, whose faith is to be the rule of ours. 2. Because it is not known what is the faith of that Church. 3. Because it is not manifest whether the faith of any Church assignable, be true.

The first is evinced two ways. For, first, it is uncertain what is the true idea or definition of the Church, what is required to constitute it, whether only an external profession of the true faith, or also internal faith and piety: and then although this were certain, it would be yet unknown, whether the Roman, Greek, or any other, were that true Church. As for the first, our adversaries would persuade us, that they agree in the notion of a true Church. Yet nothing is more manifest than their discord in this matter. There are chiefly three opinions of them herein: for if we should make an exact enumeration of them, we should find many more. The first teacheth, that the Church is made up of all persons baptized, and outwardly professing the true faith, and adhering to the Pope of Rome, whether they be truly faithful, or secretly infidels. The second to an external profession, requires internal faith, at least in form, to be added as necessary; and thereby excludes all secret infidels and heretics. The third requireth charity to be added to these two, and leaveth no place in the Church, but to those who are truly just, and free from mortal sin.

The first opinion is defended by many, particular Canus, Bellarmine, Duval, and almost all the later writers of con-

troversy, especially the French. The second is taught by many : for all those seem to favour it, who define the Church to be the congregation of the faithful ; of whom Launoy* reckons up a very great number. But it is openly and manifestly taught by Alensis, Clemangis, Turrecremata, and Jacobatius ; while in the places formerly cited they assert, that the Church may be reduced to one only woman, as it actually was at the time of our Saviour's passion. The University of Cracow produced by Launoy,† defined‡ the Church to be a mystical, organical body, animated by the faith of Christ, constituted by all baptized persons, having the faith of Christ either in form or formal. The same opinion is accurately and largely defended by Suarez,§ Arriaga,|| and Caspensis¶ among the moderns.

The third opinion seemeth to be favoured by Bannes,** while he saith, "The catechumens simply belong to the invisible Church, as being members of Christ through charity ; but to the visible Church only in part, viz. in wish and desire." But he inclineth more to the second, in these words,†† "The Church, although it be a visible commonwealth, requireth somewhat visible, to wit, faith. Heretics therefore, as wanting that, are out of the Church." And in another place,‡‡ "The faithful which are sinners, are truly parts of the Church militant." But to omit Bannes, the third opinion is openly maintained by Hugo à Sancto Victore, whose words are these :§§ "The Church hath stones, to wit, the faithful, who as one stone is

* Laun. Epist. tom. 8. ad Gattin. [Lib. 8. p. 665. vol. 5. pars. 2. Colon. Allob. 1731.]

† Ubi supra.

‡ Est Ecclesia Corpus mysticum, organicum, fide Christi animatum,— Ex quo fit quod omnes baptizati, habentes fidem Christi sive informem sive formatam, constituunt Ecclesiam militantem.

§ Suar. de Fide, disp. 9. sect. 2. [Mogunt. 1619.]

|| Arr. de Fide, disp. 7. sect. 2. ¶ Casp. de Fide, disp. 2. sect. 2. 9.

** Catechumeni simpliciter pertinent ad Ecclesiam invisibilem, siquidem sunt membra Christi per charitatem ; sed ad Ecclesiam visibilem secundum quid, viz. per votum et desiderium. Bann. in 2. 2. quest. 1. art. 10. p. 47.

†† Ecclesia licet sit Respublica quædam visibilis, requirit tamen aliquid invisibile, sc. fidem. Hæretici ergo extra eam sunt, cum fidem non habeant. Id. comm. fus. in art. 10. p. 90.

‡‡ Fideles peccatores sunt vere partes Ecclesiæ militantis. Id. Comm. brev. p. 47.

§§ Ecclesia habet lapides sc. fideles ; qui, sicut per cæmentum lapis jungitur lapidi. sic per charitatem junguntur sibi. Hug. lib. C. Serm. serm. 3.

joined to another by cement, are joined to the Church by charity." And in another place,* "The holy Church is the body of Christ, quickened by one Spirit, and united by one faith, and sanctified. This word therefore signifieth the members of Christ partaking of the Spirit of Christ." Antoninus of Florence, after he said, The Church is sometimes taken for the general collection of the faithful, subjoins these words:† "In the second place the Church is taken for the congregation of good believers, who are incorporated into Christ by charity. This is that Church which is governed by the Holy Ghost, the mystical body of Christ, which is animated by his Spirit, for which Christ prayed, that her faith should not fail." The same saith Cusanus:‡ "It is manifest that this body of the Church, which is thus disposed (which adhereth to Christ in spirit, in which the Spirit dwells, quickening the whole body) is made up only of predestinate persons. Only those persons, therefore, who continue in the grace of present righteousness, are accounted to be of the Church." Dionysius Carthusianus§ brings in Christ thus speaking: "I will build and confirm my Church, that is, the congregation of the faithful, by inseparably uniting their hearts to me by faith, charity, and grace; so as all may be one mystical body, and one house." J. Fr. Picus Mirandula saith,|| "That we ought not to recede from the proper signification of the word; that so that might be called primarily, properly, and most principally the holy catholic Church, which comprehendeth all men of a right and apostolic faith, and unfeigned charity." Ferus upon those

* *Ecclesia sancta corpus est Christi uno spiritu vivificata, et unita fide una, et sanctificata.*—Hoc itaque nomen significat membra Christi participantia Spiritum Christi. *Id. de Sacr. part. 2. cap. 2.*

† *Secundo modo sumitur Ecclesia pro congregatione bonorum fidelium, qui sunt per charitatem Christo incorporati. Hæc est Ecclesia, quæ regitur à Sp. S. corpus Christi mysticum, quod vegetatur spiritu ejus, pro qua Christus oravit, ne fides deficeret. Ant. Summ. Theol. part. 3. tit. 12. cap. 1.*

‡ *Manifestum est hoc corpus Ecclesiæ, quod ita se habuit, ex prædestinatis tantum constitui*—Existentes in gratia præsentis justitiæ solum de Ecclesia esse censentur. *Cus. Concord. lib. 1. cap. 4.*

§ *Ædificabo et confirmabo Ecclesiam meam, id est, congregationem fidelium, corda eorum per fidem, charitatem et gratiam mihi inseparabiliter connectendo; ita ut omnes sint unum corpus mysticum, unaque domus. Carth. in Matth. xvi. art. 26.*

|| *A propria vocabuli significatione recedendum ipse non putarem; ut primo et proprie principalissimeque Sancta Catholica Ecclesia diceretur, quæ omnes rectæ et Apostolicæ fidei et non fictæ charitatis homines complecteretur. Pic. Theor. 13.*

words, Matth. xv. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it, saith,* Christ speaks not here of the Church as it is commonly understood of the collection of all Christians, whether good or bad, but of the Church according to the Spirit, which comprehends only the elect." Lastly, Chr. Lupus† affirms, "that the Church which received the keys, is not the universal communion of the faithful in the lawful sacraments, but the sole congregation of the just, or the communion of saints : " which he pursueth at large, and proveth by many testimonies of St. Augustine ; to which we might add many others no less cogent of other Fathers ; as St. Jerome, Agobardus, Bernard, &c. if our argument consisted in the truth of this opinion. It sufficeth to shew it was received by many ; and consequently that our adversaries do not agree in forming the idea of a Church.

Now this dissension is of great moment. For if the second, or especially the third opinion be true, the doctrine of our adversaries will be wholly overthrown. For not to say, that if sinners be excluded out of the Church, the Pope and whole Councils may perhaps not belong to it, and so want that infallibility which is appropriated to the true Church : to omit this, since we treat not now of active but passive infallibility, I say, that according to this hypothesis the faith of our adversaries cannot rely upon the belief of the universal Church. For to conform themselves to this rule of faith, they must first perfectly know it ; which cannot be, if they know not what is that Church, whose faith they ought to follow. But how shall they know the Church, if that consists only of pious men, whom none will deny to be known to God alone ? Canus was not ignorant of this ; who rejecteth this opinion, because, saith he,‡ "all things will be uncertain, if the Church be limited to pious men." Will our adversaries therefore say, that the first of these opinions is certain, the other undoubtedly false ? That is easier affirmed than proved. Besides, of what degree of certainty would they have their assertions to be ? Not certainly of divine faith : unless heresy be imputed to all those

* Sed loquitur de Ecclesia secundum spiritum, quæ solos electos complectitur. Fer. in Matth.

† Ecclesia quæ claves accepit, non est universa fidelium in legitimis Sacramentis communio, sed sola congregatio justorum, seu Sanctorum communio. Lup. in Concil. tom. 4. p. 818.

‡ Incerta erunt omnia, si apud solos pios Ecclesia est. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 4. cap. 3. [Lovan. 1569.]

learned men, who maintain the second and third opinions. But no other degree of certainty can be obtained in these things, nor will any other suffice.

CHAP. XXV.

That our Adversaries have no way of knowing the true Church.

It doth not appear, therefore, who they are that truly belong to the Church. Yet suppose it doth, and that all baptized persons outwardly professing the true faith, are members of it; which opinion most pleaseth our adversaries, and is most advantageous for them: it is still to be inquired, which, out of so many societies that challenge to themselves the name of the Church, justly and truly claims it. For not any one that first occurs, is to be admitted and preferred before the rest. But here, if any where, a diligent and accurate examination is to be used; lest instead of the Church of Christ, we follow the Synagogue of Satan; and for divine revelations receive execrable errors. This especially becomes them, who, when they have found the Church, give over any further inquiry, and receive without examination all the dictates of it. They ought to be very vigilant and curious in the choice of their guide; lest if they haply mistake, they incur that sentence of Christ, "If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch." Let us see therefore whether our adversaries can boast they have made a just and accurate inquiry herein, and most certainly found out the true Church.

There are chiefly three methods of making this inquiry. 1. From the truth of the doctrine professed by any Church, and conformity of that to the word of God. 2. By notes known only by the light of right reason, and independently from the word of God. 3. By notes which are marked out and taught in the Scripture. Arriaga preferreth the first method before all others. "I answer," saith he,* "that the

* Respondeo veritatem doctrinæ probari etiam posse, non recurrendo ad Ecclesiam, imo ante primam probationem veræ Ecclesiæ debere probari veritatem doctrinæ.—Etenim cum Ecclesia, ut Ecclesia, definiatur per hoc, quod sit cœtus profitentium veram doctrinam fidei, repugnat in terminis me supponere aliquam congregationem esse veram Ecclesiam; nisi dicam eo ipso ibi esse veram doctrinam. Ergo non possum primo probare veram doctrinam ex vera Ecclesia. Arr. de Fide, disp. 7. sect. 5.

truth of the doctrine may be proved without recurring to the Church; yea, and that before the first proof of the true Church, the truth of the doctrine ought to be proved." He proveth both parts of his assertion largely, and in the second part of it maketh use of this argument: For since the Church, as a Church, is defined the congregation of men professing the true doctrine of faith, it is a contradiction in the very terms, to suppose any congregation to be the true Church, unless I do for that very reason suppose there is the true doctrine. I cannot therefore first prove the doctrine is true from the truth of the Church. To this we willingly subscribe, and approve this method of Arriaga's only. Not so the rest of our adversaries, who detest it, and labour to render it both infamous and impossible; pretending it to be full of inextricable difficulties, and not to be surmounted by the most learned, much less by illiterate persons. Wherefore I need not endeavour to prove that the true Church cannot be by this way known by our adversaries: they freely grant it, urge it, and labour to demonstrate it.

The second method is used by many; who contend that the Church may be known independently from the word of God by the help of notes and characters perceived by natural reason, such as are miracles, sanctity, antiquity, amplitude, and the like. But they withal admonish that the Church cannot this way be known, as it hath annexed to it the privilege of infallibility by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and consequently as it is the certain rule of faith. They deny this can be any other way found out than by faith, relying on the promises of Christ and the other testimonies of Scripture. But that the authority, which these notes confer, is human, fallible, and a foundation only of human and acquired, not of divine and infused faith. So among infinite others teach Canus,* Bannes,† Suarez,‡ Duval,§ Conink,|| Arriaga,¶ Ysambertus,** Gillius,†† Amicus,‡‡ and Rhodius:§§ the last of these affirms,

* Loc. Theol. lib. 2. cap. 8.

† In 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 1. dub. 4.

‡ De Fide, disp. 3. sect. 10.

§ In 2. 2. p. 10.

|| De Actib. sub. disp. 17. n. 68.

¶ De Fide, disp. 3. sect. 1.

** De Fide, disp. 26. art. 2.

†† De Doctr. sacra. lib. 1. tract. 7. cap. 9.

‡‡ De Fide, disp. 2. sect. 5.

§§ Duplex est autoritas Ecclesiæ, alia est pure humana. prout sc. eam probant miracula, prophetiæ, et alia hujusmodi: alia est divina, prout ex assistentia Sp. S. est infallibilis. Neutra potest esse objectum formale fidei. Non prima, sequeretur enim fidem esse naturalem, esse fallibilem, &c. Rhod. de Fide, quæst. 2. sect. 4. §. 4.

“there is a two-fold authority of the Church ; the one purely human, as it is proved by miracles, prophecies, and such like ; the other divine, as it is infallible by the assistance of the Holy Ghost. Neither can be the formal object of faith. Not the first, for then it would follow that faith were natural, fallible,” &c. Certainly, it is absurd to imagine that the Church of Christ, redeemed and governed by him, and animated by his Spirit, can be known by the sole light of nature without revelation. Nature might discover somewhat admirable and excellent in it ; but nothing more than human, or exalted beyond human infirmities. But this is not that we seek for. We are inquiring a method of knowing the Church as it is the rule of faith, and infallible ; which since this method cannot perform, it cannot be produced in this place.

For these reasons our adversaries fly to the third method, and endeavour to demonstrate the Church from notes, which they pretend to be assigned in Scripture. So Driedo* from hence, that Christ is not now present, nor teacheth with his own mouth in the Church, nor attesteth the preaching of others with signs and miracles, concludes, “We must necessarily flee to the Scriptures, and inquire thence which is the true Church.” Stapleton :† “We say, therefore, and willingly acknowledge with St. Augustine, that the Church is to be sought for in the Scripture ; that is, what are the notes, privileges, and properties of the Church, is to be found out from the oracles of holy Scripture, not from human arguments.” The same say the Popish disputants in the Conference of Ratisbon:‡ “We know the Christian religion only from the Scriptures ; because from the notes only declared in Scripture, and from no others, we know which is the true Church.” This way also Cardinal Richelieu§ chiefly follows.

But there are many things inconsistent to be found in it : As first, that it supposeth the Scripture to be acknowledged for the word of God. For no man can believe the notes of

* De Eccl. dogm. lib. 2. cap. 3. lib. 4. cap. 4.

† Dicimus ergo, et libentissime dicimus cum Augustino, in Scripturis quærendam esse Ecclesiam, *i.e.* quæ sint notæ, dotes et proprietates Ecclesiæ ex S. Scripturæ oraculis, non ex humanis documentis investigandum esse. De Princip. doct. lib. 1. cap. 24.

‡ Tantummodo igitur ex Scripturis Religionem Christianam cognoscimus ; quia tantummodo ex notis in Scriptura declaratis, et non ex aliis cognoscimus, quæ sit vera Ecclesia. Colloq. Ratisb. sess. 8.

§ Meth. liv. 1. cap. 8.

the Church laid down in the Scripture to be true and certain, till he be first persuaded that all things contained in it are true and divine. But how shall he who hath not yet known the Church (for such is he who inquires after it) be assured of the divinity of Scripture, if it be true what our adversaries so often inculcate, "that the Scripture to us is of no authority, till attested and confirmed by the Church?" Thus a manifest circle will be committed, Scripture received for the authority of the Church, and the Church for the authority of Scripture. Cardinal Richelieu confesseth this a great difficulty, but contendeth it may be solved by saying, "the Church is known independently from the Scripture by the help of notes, which natural reason suggesteth can agree to none but the true Church." But if the Church can be known before the Scripture, what need the Scripture be consulted to find notes whereby we may be brought to the knowledge of the Church? To what end these labyrinths and fruitless toil to search out a thing already known? Not to say that this method is coincident with the second before-mentioned, and is therefore for the same reasons to be rejected. Besides, it manifestly contradicts our adversaries' hypothesis concerning the obscurity of Scripture. Every one knows how much they exaggerate this obscurity; and Richelieu himself, within a few pages of this place, maintains it is obscure, both as to sense, and as to the letter; and that not only to the reprobate, but even the elect; to the faithful and doctors themselves. Who after all this can believe that he speaks sincerely and in earnest, when he undertakes to demonstrate out of this book, so obscure and impenetrable to the greatest wits, the characters of the true Church, not to a doctor or a believer, but to an infidel? For this he pretends, about his conversion is the dispute raised.

The Cardinal therefore in that undertakes a most difficult matter. But the obscurity of Scripture is not all the difficulty of this undertaking. For how shall it be demonstrated those things are by Scripture assigned for the notes of the Church, of which Scripture is wholly silent, nay, teacheth the contrary to some of them, as might be evidently proved, if the intended brevity of this dissertation would permit it? But suppose the Scripture attributes to the Church whatsoever our adversaries would have to be so many notes of it: this avails not, unless it appear that those notes are not only true, but also the only notes, and that no other is assigned in Scripture.

This the Cardinal himself admonisheth. "It is to be observed," saith he,* "that although it doth not follow that society which hath one of the notes of the true Church, is the true Church; yet it follows, that society which wanteth one of these notes, is not the true Church." Valentia had gone before him: "These are the notes," saith he,† "which we urge, one, holy, catholic, apostolic. These are not the notes of the Church singly, but conjointly; because it may be that one or two of them may agree to others." And indeed it cannot be denied that the Greek Church hath many of these notes. If therefore from one or more of them we might argue affirmatively, the Greek must be granted to be a true Church.

To conclude therefore that the Roman, or any other is the true Church, it is necessary that no note of the true Church be wanting to it, and that it be evident no other note is assigned in Scripture besides those wherein she already glorieth. While this is uncertain, nothing can be securely concluded from any notes whatever. That an infidel therefore be rightly instructed, it is required, that he read over the whole Scripture from one end to the other, accurately weigh and examine all places, that he may be ascertained none of those notes have escaped his diligence. But this, besides that it is long and tedious, and apt rather to discourage and deter than allure an infidel to the Christian religion, is impossible, if our adversaries' doctrine of the obscurity of Scripture be admitted. For who can promise himself that nothing hath escaped his most sagacious inquiry, amidst so much darkness and intricacy, as our adversaries pretend to be in Scripture? Much less can an infidel be assured of this, whose understanding is yet clouded with errors and his eyes with blindness. Yet if he be not certain that no one note of the Church is unknown to him, how many soever he hath by his search observed, in vain doth he sweat; since even according to our adversaries, many notes contribute nothing to that society, to which any one is wanting. And this is so much the more difficult, because our adversaries are not agreed about the number of the notes. Valentia and many others assign four, Driedo six, Medina ten, Sanders and Pistorius twelve, Bellarmine fifteen, Bosius an

* Method. liv. 1.

† Non sunt notæ Ecclesiæ sigillatim sed conjunctim, quia fieri possit ut una harum et altera aliis conveniat. Val. Anal. Fid. lib. 6. cap. 7.

hundred. In so great variety of opinions what certainty can be expected?

But what if in this diligent reading of Scripture many things shall occur, whereby the catechumen will be induced to believe there are many other notes besides those which our adversaries point out, and those such as will divert him from embracing the communion of the Church of Rome? He will in the first place observe those words of Christ, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. He that is of God, heareth God's words. My sheep hear my voice."* Hence he will conclude, that the truth of doctrine, and its conformity to God's word, is the most certain note of the true Church. But our adversaries will never permit that he should make use of this note to find out the Church. For that would introduce the first method so much hated by them; and it were to be feared that the catechumen comparing the doctrine of the Church of Rome with the Scripture, would find a manifest repugnance in many things. Another note of the Church he would find to be the observation of the divine precepts from the same places. For he cannot be said to hear the voice of Christ, that obeys it not. And in other places Christ saith: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."† God also foretold by his prophets that under the new covenant he would write his laws in the hearts of men, and make them to walk in his statutes. But can the catechumen find this observation of the divine precepts in the Church of Rome, where the cup is taken from the laity, prayers performed in an unknown tongue, and many other things used expressly contrary to the divine commands?

The Scripture oft-times calls the Church the most chaste spouse of Christ. Now this chastity consists in keeping her faith to God, and transferring no part of the divine worship due to him upon any other objects. Otherwise God will implead her of adultery and give her a bill of divorcement. Will the catechumen then from this note conclude the Church of Rome to be the spouse of Christ; by whom he perceiveth so many creatures, saints deceased, their relics, the cross, images, and the host, to be worshipped and adored? Meekness and gentleness is also a note of the Church, when her children are frequently in the Scriptures called sheep, lambs, doves, turtles.

* John viii. 31, 47. x. 27.

† John xv. 10, 14.

Isaiah foretold all cruelty should be far from the Church of Christ. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."* Christ left his peace to his disciples, and said to them: Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."† Who can then imagine the Church of Christ to be that society which persecutes all dissenting from her with fire and sword, and scarce useth any other arguments than racks and gibbets? Of the same nature with this note is another laid down by David. He calls the Church "a willing people;"‡ who are not retained in the communion of their Saviour by force and fear, but by a most free and that most fervent love. Hence her most excellent pastor is said to govern her with two "staves, the one called Beauty, and the other Bands."§ But that you may not mistake, those bands are "the cords of man and the bands of love."|| Is Rome therefore the Church of Christ, which wheresoever she commands, hath no stronger bands to retain her people than the detestable tribunal of the holy Inquisition? To these two last notes is conjoined a sixth: That she be free, and not a servant of men, especially of pastors. This the Scripture teacheth in many places, particularly Gal. iv. 25, 26. John viii. 32, 36. 2 Cor. i. 24; iii. 17; iv. 5. 1 Peter v. 3. James i. 25. That, therefore, is not the Church of Christ, which serveth the Pope, whose slave Cajetan expressly calls her. Is that Church free, upon which the Pope imposeth arbitrary laws, which none must call in question? Can he be denied to be Lord of the Church, who, as the canon law tells us, "although he should carry innumerable people by troops as slaves to hell, to be with himself for ever tormented; yet no mortal must presume to reprehend his faults, because he is to judge all, to be judged of none?"¶ Who, not to mention obsolete stories, but lately commanded all to believe, there are five heretical propositions in Jansenius; and yet, although humbly entreated by many doctors, would not declare in what part of Jansenius's book they might be found? What is this but to account Christians as most vile slaves?

The seventh note of the Church consists in this,** that she worship of God in spirit and in truth. The ancient Church of the Jews indeed used a gross and sensible kind of worship,

* Isai. xi. 9. and lxxv. 25.

† Psalm cx. 3. § Zech. xi. 7.

‡ Decret. part 1. dist. 40. can. Si Papa.

† Matth. xi. 29.

|| Hos. xi. 4.

** John iv. 23.

and was employed about the mean and beggarly elements of the world : but it is the peculiar glory of the Christian Church, to worship God in a way most consentaneous to the simplicity of his being and the holiness of his nature. Not so the Church of Rome, which observeth so many diverse and difficult ceremonies ; that in comparison of them the Mosaic rites are both few and easy. This you will soon acknowledge, if you compare the fourth or at most the third part of the Pentateuch (for no more is taken up with ritual matters) with so many vast volumes, the ceremonial, pontifical, ritual, missal, gradual, and others ; which prescribe the external part of the Roman service. Lastly, the true Church is that which neither usurpeth nor disturbeth the civil government. Therein imitating Christ her master ; who offered heavenly things to all, earthly to none ; professed his kingdom was not of this world ; withdrew himself unto the mountains, when sought for by the multitude to be made a king ; and refused to be a judge in a matter of inheritance. The true Church observeth the Apostle's precept* of being "subject to the higher powers:" and that other,† of "rendering to all their due, tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour." Not so the Church of Rome, whose head, the Pope, deposeth kings at his pleasure, absolveth their subjects from their oath of allegiance, and pretends to a sovereign dominion over the whole world. I might produce many other like notes of the Church out of Scripture ; but these suffice to shew how great danger they expose the Church of Rome to, who out of those holy writings permit a judgment to be formed of her truth and purity.

I will now proceed briefly to demonstrate that not even from those notes which the Church of Rome assigns, can it be known that she is the true Church. Cardinal Richelieu assigns four, Antiquity, Amplitude, Perpetuity, and Succession. Amplitude shall be considered afterwards ; the other three I will now briefly touch. Antiquity consists solely or chiefly in this, that the Church which is called ancient, have preserved the same faith, worship, and religion from the beginning. While the Church of Rome therefore glorieth in antiquity, she meaneth that she now professeth that same faith which Christ formerly instituted, and his Apostles taught. But to know this there is no other way

* Rom. xiii. 1.

† Ibid. xiii. 7.

to compare the present doctrine of the Church of Rome with the ancient monuments of Christian religion, of which Scripture is the chief. Now this in nothing differeth from the first method, which we only approve, and our adversaries reject. If then the Church cannot be known by that method, neither can it by that which our adversaries propose. The discussion of Perpetuity is yet more difficult. For therein is to be proved not only that the present is the same with the first and original doctrine, but also that it was so in every age, and that this profession of the old religion was never once interrupted. Now how vast and unexhausted a knowledge of antiquity doth this require? No ancient monument must be neglected; infinite volumes, both printed and manuscript, must be read through. This few men can attend to; or if they could, one age would not suffice. Yet this, according to Richelieu's method must be done by any infidel who is a candidate of Christianity. The same may be said of Succession. That is twofold, of doctrine, and of persons. The first is coincident with antiquity and perpetuity: the second in Gretser's judgment is of little moment. "Without truth of doctrine," saith he,* "succession of pastors is of small weight." But suppose it of the greatest moment. What is more laborious and difficult, to say no more, than to prove that in a long series of succession continued through sixteen ages there never happened the least interruption!

Thus much of the notes singly. As for all taken together, it is manifest that even in our adversaries' opinion they cannot be certain; since they are found in the Greek Church. The Cardinal denies that of antiquity, because the Church of Constantinople cannot demonstrate her claim of being founded by St. Andrew. Let it be. Certainly the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Athens, which are parts of the Greek Church, were founded by Apostles, and the first even by Christ himself. Again, the Cardinal denieth the succession of the Greek bishops; because their Patriarchs were heretical. But first, it matters not what the Patriarchs are, if the other bishops be orthodox. Secondly, this very thing may be brought against the succession of Popes; for some of them have been condemned by General Councils. Lastly, if heresy interrupts succession; it will be no more

* Sine veritate doctrinæ successio pastorum est exigui ponderis. De Verb. Dei, lib. 4. cap. 9.

certain that the succession of Popes was never interrupted, than that no Pope was ever an heretic. But how shall this be ascertained, especially to an infidel, of whom we now treat, who may consider that many in the Church of Rome openly teach the contrary? To this may be added, that it is absurd in this case to pretend heresy against the succession of any Church. For that is the very thing now inquired by this infidel, which society of Christians is the true Church, and consequently, which of them are heretics or schismatics? This method therefore can never certainly teach us, that the Church of Rome is the true Church.

CHAP. XXVI.

That it is uncertain, what the Universal Church believeth.

IF after all this we should grant, that our adversaries may certainly know which is the true Church, it were yet to be inquired what this Church believeth. But how shall this be known? For first it doth not suffice to know what the greater or lesser part of the universal Church believeth, unless we know what is the faith of the whole. For our adversaries confess, that the greater part of it may err. So Tostatus, answering to those, who from the universal corruption of the translations of the Bible before St. Jerome's time argued, that the whole Church then erred, replied, that "all the copies indeed of the Latin Church were corrupted, but in the Greek Church were preserved entire. Now," saith he,* "the Latin Church is not the universal Church, but only a part of it. Therefore, although that had wholly erred, the universal Church would not have erred; because it remains in those parts which do not err, whether they be more or fewer in number than the parts which do err." So Canus:† "Nothing hinders, but that the greater part of the Church may err." Bannes:‡ "The opinion of the greater part of the Church may

* Ecclesia autem Latinorum non est Ecclesia Universalis, sed quædam pars ejus. Ideo etiamsi tota ipsa errasset, non errabat Eccl. universalis, quia manet Eccl. universalis in partibus istis quæ non errant, sive illæ sint plures numero quam errantes, sive non. Tost. in 2 Prol. Hier. in Matth. quæst. 4.

† At nihil obstat, cur major Ecclesiæ pars non erret. Can. loc. Theol. lib. 5. cap. 5.

‡ Sententia majoris partis Ecclesiæ potest esse falsa in materia fidei. Bann. in 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 10. dub. 4.

be false in a matter of faith." Valentia considering those words of Christ: "When the Son of Man comes, shall he find faith upon the earth?" saith,* "He signifies that there will be very few faithful in that last time; not that there will be none." And Bellarmine† treating of the same words, saith with Theophylact, that "our Lord meaneth, there will be few faithful in the times of antichrist; not yet that there will be none, nor so few, as not to constitute a Church."

Many divines, and those of great name (whose words we before produced), have gone farther, and maintained, that the true faith, and true Church may be reduced to one only woman. Nor doth John Viguerius, a Dominican, Professor of Divinity in the University of Tholouse, differ much from them, teaching that faith, at least explicit, may be preserved in one person, all the rest retaining only implicit faith. "It may be said of the Church," saith he,‡ "that it may be preserved in one person, as it is said of the Virgin Mary, that in her only, during the three days of burial, remained explicit faith, touching the divinity of Christ; although many others in Judea might have actual and implicit catholic faith, but not explicit, of the divinity of Christ."

If either of these two opinions be allowed, we must despair of ever knowing the faith of the universal Church. For where can be sought for, by what notes can be found that phoenix, that Deucalion of the Christian world, who alone retains explicit faith, when all the rest have either erred, or preserved only implicit faith? But be these opinions true or false, the opposite of neither of them can be of faith, as I before proved of the former; and of the latter may be hence proved, that this book of Viguerius is approved by the Faculty of Divinity of Paris; which would never have been done, if it had been found to contain heresy. However, let both be exploded, the other cannot be denied, that the greater part of the Church may err. Nay further, none ever yet dared to define, how

* Significat paucissimos certè fore postremo illo tempore fideles, non autem nullos. Val. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. sect. 16.

† Non tamen nullos, nec tam paucos, ut non faciant Ecclesiam. Bel. de Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 16.

‡ Sic potest dici de Ecclesia, quod potest servari in uno, prout dicitur de Maria Virgine quod in ea sola in triduo sepulturæ mansit fides explicita de divinitate Christi; quamvis multi alii per Judæam existentes habere possent fidem catholicam actualem et implicitam, non tamen explicitam, de divinitate Christi. Vig. Instit. Theol. cap. 10.

great that part of the Church must necessarily be, which cannot be infected with error, without the ruin of the infallibility of the whole. Unless therefore it appears that the whole Church consenteth, the belief of it cannot be a sure foundation for our faith.

But, first, the whole Church seldom or never consenteth. Certainly never in all things. All things therefore can never be learned from her. Whence then shall they be learned? Besides, where she doth consent, it is so obscure, that it can be known by no man. This is proved, and much more manifestly, by all those arguments which we brought against the certainty of knowing what all the pastors teach. For if it cannot be known what all the pastors teach; much less can it be known what all the faithful believe; since there are far more believers than pastors, and these teach more distinctly than the others believe. Beside, it is not sufficient to know what seemeth true to all the faithful, unless it be also known what they all embrace as revealed by God. For our adversaries acknowledge there are many false opinions of the whole Church. Maldonat* proveth this at large, and giveth some examples of it. As, that the Church for many ages used a preface upon the festival of St. Jerome, wherein she extolled his pure virginity, although St. Jerome in several places confesseth the contrary; for which reason the preface was at last expunged; that for 600 years she administered the eucharist to infants; that she worshippeth particular relics of saints, and prayeth for the souls of particular men in purgatory, although it be not of faith that those relics are true, or these souls in purgatory, and the like; which proveth the necessity of knowing, not only what is held by the universal Church, but whether it is held by her as of faith, and revealed by God. But who shall ascertain this? For the common sort of believers are not wont accurately to distinguish these things; so that if any one should ask whomsoever he meets, what they admit as true, what as revealed, what they receive with divine faith, what with catholic opinion, he would find very few who could comprehend the sense of his question; much fewer, who could answer him distinctly. So far shall we be therefore from knowing by this method what is believed in

* Apud Richer. Hist. Concil. lib. 3. cap. 3. [ut quisquis fuit qui composuit aliquando præfationem quæ diu cantata est in Ecclesia die festo B. Hieronymi in quâ præfationê Hieronymum vocavit Virginem. Atqui ipse Hieronymus duobus in locis testatur se non fuisse Virginem. Lib. 3. cap. 5. p. 146. Colon. 1681.]

the universal Church, that it can scarce be known what is believed in any single diocese.

CHAP. XXVII.

That it may justly be doubted, whether all those things be true, which the universal Church believeth.

THERE remains the third reason of the impossibility of founding the faith of all single Christians upon the belief of the universal Church, the uncertainty of the truth of this belief. For, suppose the Church of Rome to be the true Church, and that it is sufficiently known what she believeth ; it is not yet manifest whether she believeth rightly. For a true Church is one thing, an infallible Church another : yet infallible must that necessarily be, which is to us a certain rule of faith. Before all things therefore it is required to be known, that the Church is infallible. But how shall this be known ? Our adversaries commonly say, it is known by faith. But to this I oppose the opinion of those divines who hold, that all Christians may fall from the faith, except one single woman. Hence I conclude, that the infallibility of the Church cannot be of faith, because repugnant to the feelings of these catholic divines. Certainly we, who deny the infallibility of the Church, go not so far as they. We believe that God preserveth to himself, even in the most difficult times, a remnant according to the election of grace ; and that there always remains at least an invisible Church, whose name being collective, cannot consist and be restrained to one person.

Our adversaries therefore cannot pretend their opinion, as it is at this day proposed, to be of faith : and so much the less, because they can assign no foundation of this faith. Not Scripture, tradition, decrees of Popes, definitions of Councils, or consent of pastors. For, first, I have proved in the preceding discourse, that none of all these can be relied upon, at least according to our adversaries' hypothesis ; and then it is the constant doctrine of Papists, that the Church is not to be believed for them, but they for the Church. Again it is certain, that the infallibility of the Church cannot be believed for the authority of the Church itself. For that would be a manifest circle ; and he that doubteth whether the Church can err, doth for that very reason doubt she doth not err, when she

thinks that she cannot err. Therefore Bannes* said truly, "that the Church is the infallible rule of proposing and explaining truths of faith, cannot be reduced to the authority of the Church itself; for that would be to prove the same thing by itself."

Why then is it believed? Our adversaries commonly answer, that it is a thing before all others to be believed, and not for any other rule; for then the same question would return about that rule: and because they commonly require three things to make up an act of faith. 1. The testimony of God revealing, as the formal reason and principal foundation. 2. A rule whereby this revelation of God may be manifested. 3. Motives of credibility which may induce us to be willing to believe; they think the first is here present, and the third abundantly to be had in the notes of the Church, which are perceived and dictated by natural reason; but the second wanting, which they pretend not to be necessary in a matter of first belief, such as this is. But, first, if a rule be not required in forming this first act of faith, why is it necessary in others? Why may not all the other articles be believed for the authority of God by the inducement of motives of credibility, with which the Christian religion is abundantly furnished? Secondly, which is chiefly to be regarded, it is absurd to boast of a testimony of God revealing, which no way can be known. The infallibility of the Church, or any other article of belief can never be proved to have been revealed by God, but by some rule either living or dead, whereby things revealed may be distinguished from not revealed; otherwise the most foolish opinion may entitle itself to revelation, and then cannot be rejected.

Here they fly to motives of credibility, and by them undertake to supply their defect of a rule, and manifest the revelation. But if these motives can confer upon the Church so sufficient an authority, that what she proposeth as revealed by God, must be believed: why may not the like motives give the same authority to the Scripture, and assure us of the divine original of it? And that such motives are not wanting to the Scripture, Bellarmine,† Suarez,‡ Duval,§ and Martinon|| among many others expressly confess. Why may we not then

* Non potest reduci ad auctoritatem ipsius Ecclesiæ; hoc enim esset idem per idem confirmare. Bann. in 2. 2. quæst. 1. art. 1. dub. 4.

† De Verbo Dei, lib. 1. cap. 2. [p. 2. vol. 1. Prag. 1721.]

‡ De Fide, disp. 5. sect. 2, 3.

§ Duval in 2. 2. p. 120.

|| De Fide, disp. 7. sect. 1.

by these motives first be satisfied of the authority of Scripture, and from thence learn all things necessary to salvation, which are clearly contained in it; and so be saved without recurring to the Church?

Further, how is it gathered from these notes and motives of credibility, that the Church cannot err; whether evidently, certainly, and necessarily; or only obscurely, probably, and contingently? The first our adversaries will never say; for then it would necessarily follow, that faith is evident; which they all contend to be false; insomuch as Bellarmine* disputing of miracles, the chief of these motives, hath these words, "Before the approbation of the Church, it is not evident nor certain with the certainty of faith of any miracle, that it is a true one. And that it is not evident is manifest; for then faith would be evident." Besides, if these notes evidently prove the Church cannot err, it would be most false, what our adversaries before delivered with so great consent, that by these notes the Church is not known as it hath an infallible, but only as it hath a human and fallible authority. Lastly, They acknowledge, as we before shewed, that a manifest and convictive argument cannot be deduced from one or more of these notes, although fortified by the authority of Scripture, if any one be wanting. How then will they afford evidence, when perceived by the sole light of nature, and are much fewer. For they allow more notes to be pointed out by Scripture, than taught by the light of nature.

Do these notes then only persuade probably? If so, I have gained what I was to prove. For then it will be only probable that the Church cannot err; and the faith of Papists will have no certainty, as not exceeding probability. For whatsoever they believe, they believe either for the testimony or for the judgment of the Church; and so cannot be more certain or evident than is the infallibility of the Church in testifying and judging. Some, to elude this, make a twofold evidence, physical and moral; and grant the arguments of the infallibility of the Church not to be physically evident, but contend they are morally. So especially Ægidius Conink.† But here in the first place, this manifest absurdity occurs, that when they ac-

* Ante approbationem Ecclesiæ non est evidens aut certum certitudine fidei de ullo miraculo quod fit verum miraculum. Et quidem quod non sit evidens patet, quia tunc fides esset evidens. Bell. de Eccles. lib. 4. cap. 14.

† De Actib. sup. disp. 2. dub. 2. num. 46. collat. cum. dub. 3. num. 71, 72.

knowledge these arguments to be only morally certain, they yet maintain faith, which is founded solely upon them, to be physically certain; for that degree of certainty all attribute to divine faith. Besides it hence also appears, that this moral certainty doth not suffice; because it is more than morally, even physically evident, that those things are false, which the Church of Rome teacheth about the eucharist: for that the eucharist after consecration is still bread and wine, is proved by innumerable arguments of physical evidence, which consequently can never be counterweighed, much less outweighed by arguments of moral evidence, brought to prove the infallibility of that Church which teacheth a contrary opinion.

However it will not be amiss to examine, whether the arguments drawn from these notes of the Church be morally evident, as is pretended. But first we must remove the equivocation which lieth hid in this term. For it is used by the Schoolmen in a threefold sense. First, therefore, many call that morally certain, which is so probable, that many arguments persuade it, but nothing insinuates the least suspicion of the contrary. Secondly, those things are called morally certain, which, to use Bellarmine's words, are confirmed by so many signs and conjectures, as may exclude all anxiety, but not all distrust. Thirdly, those things are most properly said to be morally certain, "which are known by the common and unanimous testimony of a great multitude witnessing a thing by them seen, which testimony none contradicts;" as Conink* defines them. If our adversaries say the arguments taken from the notes of the Church are morally certain in the first or second sense; in the first place I deny it: for those things only are morally certain in those senses, against which no contrary arguments can be produced. For if any such occur, the mind fluctuates, and can obtain no certainty. Now none can deny, that there are many at least probable arguments which persuade, that the Church of Rome is not the true Church. Secondly, I assert, that neither of these certainties will suffice. For they cannot, but in a loose and improper sense, be called certainty. They are indeed mere probability, which may suffice in matters of life and action, where greater certainty cannot be had, but not in matters of belief and salvation, where the greatest is required;

* Quæ ex communi et concordi magnæ multitudinis rem visam testantis testimonio, cui nemo contradicit, noscuntur. De Actib. sup. disp. 11. dub. 1. num. 44.

whereas these may possibly be false, as is manifest in the cases of an infant whether baptized, or an host whether consecrated, which are commonly produced for examples of the first and greatest of the two kinds of moral certainty. For both the baptism of an infant, and the consecration of an host, depending upon the intention of the priest, can never be certainly known to have been duly performed. For no man can be ever speculatively certain of those things which can be false.

There remains then the third sense ; which I deny not to be sufficient, although it be not wholly consonant to the doctrine of our adversaries. But to pass by that it is manifest, that here is no place for this kind of certainty ; since it depends upon the testimony of others so framed and circumstantiated, that it is altogether, at least morally impossible to deceive, or be deceived ; as that Cæsar and Alexander formerly existed, as Rome and Constantinople do now ; whereas arguments drawn from antiquity, amplitude, sanctity, &c. are of another kind, as being wholly artificial, and consequently most different from those which beget this moral certainty. Besides, there is none of these notes, wherein the Greek Church may not equally glory with the Latin. Sanctity, amplitude, antiquity, and constancy of martyrs none can deny to her. As for miracles, the Greeks by the confession of the Latins have somewhat admirable, which is not to be found in the Roman Church. For Lupus* relates out of Chr. Angelus and Leo Allatius, that it is at this day most frequent among the Greeks, that the dead bodies of excommunicate persons immediately after death, grow black, swell, and become very hard, nor can be dissolved before the bishop gives them absolution, which being once pronounced, they are reduced into dust : “ The divine goodness,” saith Lupus, “ by these† miracles comforting and confirming in the faith, the poor Christians oppressed with the Turkish tyranny.” In this miracle four things may be observed. 1. That it is not only boasted by the Greeks, but also acknowledged by the Latins. 2. That it is an ordinary, and almost daily miracle. 3. That it is annexed to the episcopal dignity, so as their excommunication and absolution hath a sensible and supernatural effect.

* In Concil. tom. 5. p. 543.

† Captivos sub Turcica tyrannide Christianos divina bonitas consolatur per talia miracula, et in Evangelica fide confirmat.

4. That it serveth not only to favour the Christian religion professed by the Greeks, but also their private error. For, as Lupus observeth, they imagine the absolution given after death to be valid, and to deliver from the torments of hell itself; which seemeth to be confirmed by the sensible effect that immediately follows the absolution. What have the Latins like to this? Their pretended miracles are not acknowledged by their adversaries, but rather convinced of falsity by them, and even by many of their own communion; they are rare, not ordinary, nor annexed to any ecclesiastical dignity; and such as, if they were true, serve to confirm only the Christian religion in general, not their own particular tenets.

It is manifest, therefore, that those arguments are not certain, which are deduced from the notes of the Church; since, if they were so, they would demonstrate, what our adversaries think to be false, that the Greek is the true and infallible Church. This might be evidently evinced, if we considered each note singly. But besides that it is already accurately performed by our Reverend B. Morton, Jo. Gerardus, and others, it seems not very necessary in this place. Here, therefore, I finish, and in one word conclude, that the Papists, who boast of having so many immoveable foundations of their faith, have not so much as one which is solid; and that what they believe, they do it pertinaciously indeed, but neither certainly nor firmly.

A

PERSUASIVE TO AN INGENUOUS TRIAL

OF

OPINIONS IN RELIGION.

SECT. I.

THE great reason why they are few in comparison who come to a right understanding and a well-grounded persuasion in matters of religion, is, because they are not many who make a due inquiry into them. Were this done more generally, there would not be so much ignorance and error in the world, nor so great a variety of opinions and sects, as there is, and for the most part hath been in the world.

And there are three sorts of men who fail of knowing the truth, for want of due endeavours to find it out. Some there are who want ability or opportunity to inquire; others, who wanting neither, do utterly neglect it, and will not apply their minds to it at all; a third sort make but a very imperfect search after truth. And so all ignorance or mistake in things of moment, that concern the salvation of men, or the peace of the Church, may be attributed either to want of power and means to inquire after truth, or to unwillingness and perfect negligence, where it may be sought and attained to; or to laziness, inactivity, and partiality in seeking it.

To the first sort, we are not only to reckon idiots, who want a competent measure of reason and understanding wherewith to judge, but those also that having the same common natural gifts of the mind with others, are yet, by reason of their outward circumstances, kept almost invincibly ignorant, having very little or no occasion given them to inquire into things, that they might know them better. And thousands who sit in Pagan, or Mahometan, or Popish darkness, are thus detained in gross errors and remediless ignorance, as the case at present stands with them. But, blessed be God, this is not our case, who live in such a time and place as put no man under circumstances of incurable ignorance.

As for the second sort of men, who have plentiful means and fair opportunities of being better informed, but utterly neglect to use them, they are either such who remain under the power of those false principles which were instilled into them in their education, or who blindly follow erring guides, whose persons they have in admiration, resolving never to trouble themselves with a free and impartial use of their own reason concerning those doctrines which they have in their own opinion wisely and falsely taken upon trust. It happens likewise very often, that men are led away by lofty conceits of their own judgment; and the extravagant opinion they have of themselves, will not suffer them to attempt such an ingenuous examination of things, as implies a possibility of their being deceived. But I believe they are more who take up opinions, and engage in parties for worldly ends and carnal interests; and these, of all others, are farthest from inquiring and conviction, because it is a great uneasiness to a man's mind, to find himself mistaken in those opinions which are for his profit or pleasure in this world. And mostly the power of custom strengthens all these causes of obstinacy in neglecting to inquire. Men are not willing to quit the persuasions they have for a long time entertained, but had rather keep where they are, without troubling themselves to begin all anew, and to inquire whether they have not been all along deceived. And where most of these obstructions meet together, as they often do, in the same person, if he be not succoured mightily by the grace of God, his mind is barred up for ever against the knowledge of the truth.

A third sort miss of the truth, not that they make no inquiry, but because they do this very imperfectly and superficially, and that either through sloth and laziness, being not willing to take that pains and care which is requisite for the discovery of truth, or through partiality: whence it comes to pass, that they examine and weigh only or chiefly what is offered in favour of their own side, and make it the great end of their search not to follow what shall appear to be true upon inquiry, but to be confirmed in their present persuasion. And because diligence and honesty are very necessary dispositions in order to the right understanding of a great many things in religion, no wonder that they who inquire without these advantages, are rather hardened in error than convinced of the truth.

Now these being the common causes of ignorance and error

amongst us at this day, and since they all centre in want of due inquiry, I shall set myself to excite all sorts of people, who are not made incapable by natural weakness of understanding, to prove and examine things which concern their own souls, and the peace of Christians, with that diligence and ingenuity which becomes reasonable creatures. And though I know it is a hard task that I am undertaking, by reason of the prejudices and corrupt interests of men which I must now encounter; yet I am sure no advice can be more rational than this, that we should be persuaded to use our reason; which if we do not, we lay up the common talent of our natures in a napkin.

For God hath endued us with faculties whereby we can discern between truth and error; and moreover with a natural desire to know the truth: so that the use of these faculties is inexcusably neglected, and this desire is foully corrupted and debased, if we are easily imposed upon in things of great moment. God in our creation hath enabled and inclined us to seek the knowledge of truth, and to inquire into the grounds of our belief and practice: and therefore to neglect this, is to abuse the first gifts of God, and to sin against nature.

And it should be every man's care to find out that truth which concerns religion and another life, because this is every man's greatest interest; we should bestow most diligence there, where to be deceived is of most dangerous consequence.

But because there are some plausible pretences against a due and impartial inquiry in matters of religion, I shall prepare my way by endeavouring to remove those prejudices that lie against it; and in order hereunto, I shall consider these three questions.

1. Whether it be dangerous to private men to leave them to use their own judgment, and to be led by it in matters of faith and religion?

2. Whether a general liberty of examining and judging in those things, doth mischief in the Church, and be the cause of schisms and heresies?

3. Whether if every one have a just right to examine for himself, this be not a good reason for toleration, or the universal liberty of practising according to a man's conscience or persuasion, after examination?

SECT. II.

1. Whether it be dangerous to private men to allow them the use of their own judgment in matters of religion?

Now to leave men wholly to themselves in this business,

without directing them to use the best helps they can to find out the truth, is very dangerous indeed ; and no wise man will contend for this liberty of judgment in behalf of Christian people, or of any sort of men whatsoever : for this were not so much to advise them to judge for themselves, as to conclude for themselves before they had taken any pains to judge. For I do not see how men can be said to judge, who refuse the means without which they can make no trial. Now the assistance of men of greater knowledge and ability than themselves have, is one very necessary means by which private and unlearned persons are to examine and judge in matters of religion. And God hath not only given us ability to find out some truths by ourselves, but also to weigh and consider what others offer to us : and therefore he hath appointed governors and guides of souls, that are to feed the flock, and to instruct Christian people the way to heaven. And one part of their work is to enable them "to give an answer to every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in them," 1 Pet. iii. 15, which I conceive they cannot do, without informing and helping them to judge for themselves. So that liberty of examining in order to private judgment, does by no means exclude advising with and hearkening to men of greater skill and ability than ourselves, especially to the public guides of souls, but rather makes it necessary so to do, this being one means of God's appointment by which we are to inform ourselves. And I grant that without very good and clear reason, we are not to depart from their doctrine, but in all doubtful cases to presume in favour of it.

But that it should be dangerous to private persons to weigh and consider, as well as they can, what their guides teach them to believe or to do, this is that which I can by no means understand, unless it were a dangerous thing to follow our guides like men that have reason, and not like beasts that have none. It is at any time as safe to follow a guide with our eyes open, as to suffer ourselves to be blindfolded, and then to follow him by a string. God hath referred us to guides, Heb. xiii. 17, but yet he hath trusted us to ourselves too, and we are to "try the spirits whether they be of God ;" otherwise we may follow guides that want guides themselves. And "if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch."

To say that inquiries after truth with the best endeavours and means that we have in our power, is the way to be mistaken, is to reproach our own reason, and God the author of

it; since, as it seems, the more we exercise and improve our reason, the more likely we are to be in the wrong, and to deceive and abuse ourselves.

At the great day of accounts, seducers shall answer for those whom they have deceived. And therefore the guides of the Church are strongly obliged that they do not through wilfulness or negligence mislead us. But if they mislead us in things that touch our eternal state, I do not find that all the blame will lie upon them, but rather that we also shall answer for it ourselves: otherwise why should our Saviour say, "Why of yourselves do ye not judge that which is right?" Luke xii. 57, and St. John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, &c." 1 John iv. 1, and St. Paul, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. v. 21; and "Let no man deceive you." 2 Thess. ii. 3. Again, if it be dangerous to permit men to judge for themselves in that sense wherein I contend for it, then these are not wholesome but very dangerous exhortations.

And yet if a Church which pretends to be an infallible guide in religion, could make it out clearly and plainly that she is so, I should, without much examination of her particular doctrines, receive them as the oracles of God. But then I must have stronger arguments to assure me that she is infallible, than those which at present make me certain that she is actually deceived. For to submit to a pretended infallible authority, without knowing why I do so, is to put it into the power of others, for ought I know, to lead me into the most damnable errors, and to call virtue vice, and vice virtue. Therefore they must be very convincing reasons upon which I am to believe that of my guide, which being once admitted, I must take his bare word afterward for all things else. I think none of the Roman communion will deny this. And then it will follow, that for my own safety I am to use my own reason and judgment as severely as I can, before I admit this fundamental article of their faith. And this will amount to what I say, that it is so far from being dangerous for men to use their own judgment in matters of religion, that it is very dangerous for them not to do so; since otherwise they are likely not to follow men of the greatest conscience, as they for the most part are who have the least reason for it.

Besides, if I am led into error by the authority of a Church that does not pretend to infallibility, I may hope to recover the knowledge of the truth, especially if it be a matter of great

consequence, more than if she pretended I believed her infallible. For such a Church will not so readily deny me the means of examining her doctrine, and so I may be able to discover the error of myself: if not, I have this comfort at least, that my guides being not engaged to contend that they are infallible, are themselves in the way of detecting their own mistake, and will more easily come off from it. But they that pretend to infallibility, are staked down to their opinions; and though their cause be never so bad, they are engaged to serve it. And therefore this pretence is so far from discharging me of the pains of using my own judgment and reason in matters of religion, that I make the most foolish venture in the world, if I do not use my reason as strictly as I can in examining that very pretence before I admit it. And though a Church's claim to infallibility were in itself never so just and well-grounded, it is to me but a pretence, till I understand the grounds of it.

Nor can any man blame me, if before I am convinced of the infallibility of that Church, I take those particular doctrines into consideration which are to be believed on this account, that I may this way also judge of the reasonableness of that pretence: for it is not for nothing that men would be thought infallible. If I find the doctrine they would put off with such authority, to be indeed divine and heavenly, rational and scriptural, tending to the reformation and salvation of mankind, this will incline me to yield more easily to the antecedent arguments of the infallibility of that Church. But if the doctrine for which she vouches this authority does, upon the most impartial trial that I can make, appear to be worldly, unscriptural, or contrary to common sense; then I am bound to examine the grounds of her pretence more severely than in the former case. And there is no question but such doctrines may be taught by men pretending to inspiration or infallibility, which will justify a man in rejecting that pretence out of hand, and troubling himself no more about it. If a physician of never so great name should tell me that he would infallibly cure my disease, and then prescribe a dose of arsenic, I think reason would advise rather to question his infallibility, because he goes thus madly to work, than to take his poison because he promises an infallible cure.

Now if I am not to do violence to my own understanding in things that concern my bodily health, much less should I do the same in things that regard my everlasting state. And they are a strange sort of men, who will allow people the

liberty of using their reason as well as they can for the security of their worldly interests, but will have them be led in the great affairs of religion and eternity, as if they had no reason at all. For to judge aright, and to know the truth in matters of religion, which is our highest concernment, was the principal end for which we have reason, and are creatures of judgment and choice. And they may as well say that it is dangerous for a man to walk abroad with his eyes open, as that it is dangerous for him to take upon himself to judge as well as he can, whether he be in the right way to heaven or not.

SECT. III.

If we consider what has been already said, it will not be difficult to answer the second question.

2. Whether a liberty of examining and judging in matters of religion, doth mischief in the Church, and be the cause of heresies and schisms? To which I answer, that,

To affirm this, is in effect to say, that it had been much better, in order to the peace of the Church, and the prevailing of truth, that men had been nearer to stocks and stones, than endued with natural abilities of judging, and natural propensions to use those abilities; which I think would be to reflect upon the wisdom of our Maker. For certainly it had been better for men to have wanted the faculties of judging and proving, if it be so dangerous a thing to the Church to make use of them. Nor is it much for the credit of the Church, that it should be against her interest for men to examine her doctrine, and use their reason about it as well as they can.

To speak to the thing: it is not the liberty of examination and judgment in order to the knowledge of the truth, that causeth heresies and schisms, but the not making a right use of this liberty, *i. e.* men entering upon this work with pride, and the prevalency of lust and passion, and worldly interest, their want of care and diligence, and of proving things sufficiently; their taking up opinions without reasonable examination, and then seeking for pretences to colour their obstinacy. The lust and vices of men are against the peace of the Church and the interest of truth, but not the use of that reason which is the divine part of our natures, and which God hath given us to restrain and govern our inferior faculties.

It is true, indeed, that if few or none troubled themselves at all to judge in matters of religion, there would be no here-

sies. But it is too true, that if they had no reason to judge of these things at all, there would have been no heresies; and it is as true, that if there had been no religion at all, it were impossible that there should be heresies in religion. But will any men say, that reason or religion is therefore the cause of heresies? And yet there is as much reason to say this, as to conclude that the use of our own understandings in the things of God, is the cause of heresies. These things are too gross to need a confutation.

And yet this pretence against the liberty of proving what is propounded to us in religion, is intended chiefly against private and ordinary persons, but not against the public guides and officers of the Church; whereas in truth, if there be any thing in it, it holds more strongly against these than against the other: and that because the most pernicious heresies that ever came into the Church, were brought in by men of learning and authority in the Church. And if this pretence be good, they of all men should be forbidden to inquire into matters of religion; because if they fall into any dangerous mistake, their authority is likely to give reputation to it, and to make it go down more easily with the common people, than if it had been started by one of themselves. So that we must not lay the heresies that have been in the Church, to the liberty we have been contending for, unless we will be content to exclude *all* from the duty of proving what they have been taught to believe. And no man can think this reasonable, unless he takes all religions to be equally true, that is, every one to be alike false. And he that believes this, needs not care what heresy he is of.

SECT. IV.

3. But if every man hath a just liberty and right to examine for himself, is not this a good reason for toleration, or for the universal liberty of practising according to a man's conscience or persuasion? For to what purpose is liberty of inquiry, if, after all, I must be concluded by the authority of my superiors, or else suffer under those laws by which they provide for uniformity in religion?

To this I answer, that every man's right and duty to judge for himself in matters of religion, is no good reason for toleration, unless it were also apparent that every man used that right as he ought to do, *i. e.* with industry, deliberation, and

impartiality. If all men were sincere, and would examine without prejudice, without that bias to one side which is made by lust and passion, and worldly interest, if they all intended to know the truth, that they might do their duty, then doubtless it were very fit that all should enjoy an undisturbed liberty of practice according to their judgment; for then no man would err in things plain and necessary to his own salvation and the peace of Church and State. For our Lord hath assured us, that "if any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." But so long as there is that hypocrisy in the world whereof men are conscious to themselves, so long as all those vices also reign, which insensibly corrupt the judgment, and make men disloyal to the truth, while they perceive it not; it is by no means reasonable that the State under which we live, should leave us lawless, and free from all obligation of temporal penalties what religion we profess, and what communion we observe. For the most dangerous pretence for the carrying on of seditious and rebellious designs against the government, is that of religion: and a few men that mean nothing but their own greatness and power, shall be able to manage the zeal of a superstitious multitude against the Government for their own private ends, while they scorn the superstition of their followers, and perhaps all pretence to religion in their own hearts. And therefore it concerns the Government to take care that the true religion be protected by the laws, and then to provide by the most prudent methods that no other be professed in the commonwealth.

If it be said, that the end of all liberty to inquire and judge for ourselves is destroyed, if at last we must conform to the laws, or be punished for our refusal: the contrary will be easily shewn to any one who believes that we are infinitely more concerned what will become of us in the life to come, than in our present fortunes. For suppose that they are errors which authority requires us to profess, and that they are unlawful things which it requires us to do in divine service, and that by a due and diligent examination of things I come to know this; do I get nothing by my inquiry, but the severity of those human laws that are against me; do not I obtain the comforts of a good conscience, in having honestly endeavoured to know the truth, and in doing what I thereupon know to be my duty? If I do hereby obtain God's favour at present, and shall obtain God's rewards in a better life, is not this

worth all my care and sincerity, though I should get nothing by it in this world but trouble and persecution?

So that it is worth the while to examine the doctrine imposed upon me by authority, though I know beforehand that, be it right or wrong, I must be punished by man if I receive it not.

True religion, and our obligation to profess God's truth, and to do his will, stands indeed upon the authority of God, and the evidence of divine revelation; but nevertheless, the profession thereof ought to be encouraged and protected by the powers of the world, and by consequence all false religions should be discountenanced, and the profession of them made uneasy by their laws: Scripture and reason teach us, that they, no less than parents, should use that authority for God, which they have received from him. But if they, for want of sincere trial and examination, do themselves establish iniquity or heresy by a law, and turn the edge of their power against the true religion, they must answer it to God at the day of judgment, who hath shewed them as well as others, what is good, and what he required of them.

In the mean while persecution distinguishes between the sincere and the hypocrite; and as the insincere study how to perplex the truth, and to avoid the convictions that are upon their minds, and to reconcile their apostasy to their credit and consciences; so the honest inquire into the grounds of their faith more diligently, and being desirous to strengthen themselves under sufferings by a full assurance that they suffer for righteousness sake, they search into all the grounds of their persuasion more narrowly than if they had never come under this temptation: and by this means the true doctrine comes to be propounded to the world, with the advantage of stronger arguments, and those better managed, than if it had never met with opposition.

But if the true faith and worship be established by law, and the penalties of nonconformity be strictly required; this is so far from hindering men from inquiring, that it lays an obligation upon a great many to consider things impartially, who otherwise would never have looked but upon one side of the question; I mean all those whom either wantonness and self-conceit, or faction and worldly interest, or the undue admiration of men's persons, and the like, would have held under a constant prejudice against reason and truth. A carnal argument for a good cause, is very often a wholesome means

to remove a carnal prejudice against it : and the authority of the magistrate can hardly be better used in matters of religion, than to make such a difference between the observers of the ecclesiastical laws, and the dissenters from them, that it shall be very hard for any man to lie under a worldly temptation to dissent, sufficient to recompense the damage he must undergo. This will make a great many impartial in weighing the objections against conformity, with the arguments and answers on the other side, and by degrees bring them to the knowledge of the truth, and at length to a sincere love of it. It is a false maxim, that "force in matters of religion makes hypocrites, but not true converts." For sometimes it cures hypocrisy, very often ignorance and partiality ; and that is a good degree towards conversion : and yet this will not justify the putting of men to death for mere difference in religion. The least degree of severity which will do the business, is great enough. The supreme powers should consider their subjects in these cases, as a wise and good father would consider his own children ; who, if he had power of life and death over them, would not kill his misbelieving son, and yet would try to reduce him by worldly discipline, and drive him to consideration by the sensible effects of his displeasure. The moderation of the English laws for uniformity, is visible to all disinterested persons ; and though the unevenness of their execution hath rendered them less effectual, yet there are several who have cause to bless God for being compelled to come to our churches, and to consider the terms of our communion with some impartiality ; whereas if there had been an absolute toleration, their ignorance and prejudices might have led them they know not whither.

The Church of England causeth the Scriptures to be publicly read, and puts them into the people's hands, and desires nothing more than that every one would diligently and impartially consider the cases between her and those that separate from her. And it is no absurd thing to say, that this liberty of judgment which she allows, is consistent with the English laws that require conformity of all ; since if it had not been for those laws, some men had never attained to liberty of judgment, but had still been held in bondage to their prejudices and errors.

And it is much to be feared, that they make the greatest noise for liberty of practice according to their judgment, who have made little or no use of their judgment in distinguishing

between good and bad, true and false. They demand one liberty, while they make no use of another; the liberty of being undisturbed and licentious in a wrong way, while they never use that liberty of examining the grounds of their persuasion, to which the Church so vehemently persuades them by her ministers.

If it be urged, that when a man sets himself with honesty and diligence to examine the case of communion with the Church, and doth all that he can to inform himself aright in this matter, but cannot be satisfied that he may lawfully conform, and this through mere weakness of understanding; it is not reasonable that he should suffer any thing for that.

It may be said on the other side, that there are many more who fail of understanding their duty in this kind, for want of examination and inquiry, and through the prevalence of prejudice and passion, than there are of those who continue erroneously persuaded through mere weakness of understanding. But as for those who in perfect weakness remain unconvinced, if I may suppose any such, I wish the laws could distinguish them from the rest, and that they could be known by some visible characters, that they might be exempted from undergoing any penalties. But since this cannot be, it must be endured that a few, or none in comparison, come to have hard measure, by means of that which is necessary for the common and public good.

SECT. V.

Having premised thus much concerning this subject, I shall proceed in this method following.

I. To consider in what cases we are to inquire most of all into the truth.

II. To shew how, or by what rules or tests, we are to try and examine opinions in religion.

III. How we ought to be disposed and qualified that our inquiries may be profitable and successful.

IV. To lay down some motives whereby to persuade men to such inquiry and examination.

V. To consider what becomes us and is our duty, after the discovery and knowledge of the truth.

I. I shall consider in what cases we ought to be most careful in making inquiries after the truth, lest we be imposed upon or mistaken.

All inquiries about religion are either concerning the truth

of religion in the general ; or supposing the existence and providence of God, which is the true religion, whether the Pagan, or the Jewish, or the Mahometan, or the Christian ; or the truth of the Christian religion being granted, what communion of men professing Christianity, is to be chosen ; for instance, whether the Church of Rome, or the Church of England, or the communion of the Dissenters who separate from this Church.

But now all things are not alike needful to be proved, nor are equally proper matters of inquiry. For,

1. Every man is not bound to know all the false ways of religion that are in the world, and therefore not to try and examine every one of them. It is sufficient for most men, that they will consider the faith and profession to which they have been educated, that if it be the truth, they may be well grounded in it ; if it be false, that they may upon good reason depart from it.

2. Things that are self-evident, need not to be examined : for no argument can make them plainer to us than they are already. We may, without any hesitation, assent to such principles as these : "That God cannot lie ; that men ought to observe fidelity and justice to one another," and the like. If there were not some principles that needed no proving, it were impossible to prove any thing ; and the more plain any thing is in itself, the less need there is to examine it. If I am told that white is black, I shall not go about to disprove it, because the thing is evidently false of itself, and I can use no argument that can make the matter plainer than it was at first. In like manner, if any man pretends that there is no difference between vice and virtue but in name, and that all things are equally lawful ; this shall not put me to the trouble of examining the thing, because it is contrary to the common sense of mankind. And for this reason any man is to be excused that dismisses the doctrine of Transubstantiation, without taking much pains about it ; because upon a very little consideration, there appears so many gross contradictions and inconsistencies in it, that I can have no greater reason to believe any thing is true, than I have to believe that is false.

3. Some things are hardly worth the examining, and it signifies little or nothing to understand the right side of the question. If the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary were true, yet it were not worth a quarter of the pains they have taken about it in the Church of Rome.

It is by no means true, that an infallible living judge is necessary upon earth, and that for the deciding of all controversies in religion ; since all such controversies are not necessary to be decided, some of them being of so little concern to us, that it is no great matter if they remain controversies to the world's end.

But we ought to use our reason as well as we can to find out the truth in all those cases wherein it will be dangerous to be deceived ; and therefore in these four :

First, When any man or company of men would gain us over to their way by lofty and extraordinary pretences.

Secondly, When doctrines are propounded to us with considerable authority, which seem to encourage licentiousness, and to render all care of living well needless.

Thirdly, When we are tempted to separate from the communion of the established Church where we live, or if we are in a state of separation from it.

Fourthly, When opinions in religion are propounded to us by those that would get us to yield up our judgments wholly unto them, and do what they can to keep us from examining them.

A prudent man would examine in all these cases :

First, When men make extraordinary pretences. The reasonableness of which I have already shewn, with reference to that pretence of the Church of Rome to infallibility. And the like is to be said of those that pretend to work miracles, or that talk of immediate revelations, of knowing the truth by inspiration, and of more than ordinary illuminations. For it is not only a childish thing to be frightened with big words from looking what is under them, but a very dangerous sort of cowardice, to be afraid of calling those things into question which are set off with such high-flown pretences. For from hence it has come to pass, that superstition and idolatry, enthusiasm, and impostures, have prevailed so much in the world. It is somewhat strange that we should believe men the more, for that very reason upon which we should believe them less, that is, for magnifying themselves. And yet if this had not been common, Mahomet had not imposed upon so great a part of Christendom, nor our enthusiasts upon so many people in England as they have. I would not be backward to give that man a hearing, that pretends to great things in teaching religion ; but then I should be something forward to give him a trial too : for otherwise I might encourage a

very impudent hypocrite to be more impudent still, and to play upon my easiness till I had swallowed all the foolish and damnable opinions which he would have me believe for his own advantage.

Secondly, When we meet with doctrines that seem to strike at the foundations of morality and good living, we are to examine them too, before we yield our assent, though they be recommended by men of name and authority. For the end of divine truth is a good and holy life ; and therefore I should suspect that to be false doctrine, which in my judgment either takes away the necessity of piety and virtue, or discourages men from endeavouring to attain them. For instance, I find this doctrine maintained by some men of great note, that God hath from all eternity absolutely chosen some men to salvation, and reprobated the rest, without respect to any personal qualifications. Now if this be true, I cannot see for my life how the obtaining of eternal happiness, and the avoiding of damnation, depends upon any care of mine, or upon any thing that I can do, since every man's state is absolutely overruled by predestination and an irreversible decree ; so that let me do what I please, all that I can do for another world will be but lost labour, and might as well be spared. But if I am sensible of this, it is but reasonable that I should not rely upon the credit of the author or of the preacher for so perilous a doctrine ; but because it is pretended to be grounded upon the ninth chapter to the Romans, I should go to the Apostle myself, and carefully inquire into his meaning in that place, by the best rules of interpretation that I can learn. And whoever goes thus impartially to work, will find that the Apostle in that place was discoursing of another question, and indeed upon a subject that has nothing to do with this question of absolute election or reprobation of the persons of men ; and that though the words sound that way to a man that is already prepossessed, yet the meaning of them is nothing to the purpose. Suspicion of doctrines, when it is grounded upon so good a reason as we are now speaking of, should cause inquiry, and then that inquiry will discover on which side the truth lies. He that would be a libertine, and live as he lists, may be pleased when he meets with any pretended doctrine of religion that will excuse a wicked life, or discourage virtue and holiness ; and therefore it is likely that he will rest satisfied, and examine no farther. But an honest mind will not let a man deceive himself in this manner ; but if it does

not cause him to reject such opinions as soon as ever he has well satisfied himself of their consequences, it will at least keep him from admitting them, till he has tried them every way that he can.

Thirdly, We ought also to be very well satisfied, and that upon much consideration of the matter, before we separate from the communion of the Church where we live. For whatever some men may think of it, this is a business of so weighty a nature and consequence, that it is not to be resolved upon or continued in, till we are sure we are in the right, and that upon most plain and evident reasons. And if there be any case in which a Christian ought not to go rashly to work, this is one. And therefore it is greatly to be lamented, that so many amongst us, pretending to the power of godliness, should make so light a matter as they plainly do of running into separate congregations; it being very notorious, when one discourses the point with them, that they never inquired why the church-assemblies were to be forsaken, and what it is in the established forms of worship, or in the terms of our communion, that makes it needful for an honest and wise Christian to depart from it. And this is an argument that they take it to be a matter of very little consequence; for otherwise they would have applied themselves with more diligence to weigh it in all the particulars that belong to it.

And therefore I shall offer some reasons in behalf of such inconsiderate people, to convince them how bold and dangerous a thing it is to separate from this Church of England, unless they were fully satisfied upon mature examination that there are just and necessary causes for separation, such namely as will make them sinners against God, if they do not separate.

1. If without just cause I separate from this Church, I do wilfully reject the great blessings and advantages of communion with it, and must be answerable to God for slighting that merciful providence of his through which I happened to be born and bred in a place where I might enjoy the benefits of Church communion, without venturing at any disorderly and sinful practice for them. Surely it is no small blessing, if my lot has been cast where so great a blessing did, as it were, lie in wait for me, where the true Christian doctrine and way of worship was recommended to me by public authority, and established by law and custom, and defended to my hand by clear and strong arguments. If this be our case in the Church of England, then my separation from her (I say it again) makes

me guilty of a stupid and ungrateful contempt of God's exceeding mercies in disposing my condition in this world so to my advantage, that I was born, baptized, and bred in a place where the truth invited me, and was ready to receive me, before I made one step towards a search after her. Indeed to be baptized within the communion of a particular Church, and to have been born and to live under that authority which requires me to keep close to it, is of itself no sufficient reason why we should continue to be of it; but it is a mighty reason why we should examine things carefully before we leave it, or take up a resolution never to return to it, if we have left it already; because if there be no just reason for separation, we shall have the more to answer to God: for it is a great fault to neglect searching after the truth in matters of this concern, even when it lies a great way off from a man; but it is much more inexcusable to reject it when it lies at our doors.

2. I had need be very careful and impartial in this case, since if the reasons upon which I separate be not really weighty and substantial, I am at once guilty of throwing off that subordination and subjection to the pastors and guides of the Church, which the Christian profession requires, and of contemning the lawful commands of my superiors in the State, contrary to the rule of the Gospel which obliges me to submit to their ordinances. I should not easily be led to a practice where there is danger of such a complicated sin.

3. I am to consider, that differences in religion and worship, do dangerously affect the peace of the kingdom and all other societies, especially where the interests of Church and State are so mixed and interwoven together as they are in England. They that agree in religion, are the most likely to be at peace, and to agree together in other things. But it seldom happens that they maintain hearty correspondence in any thing, who are of opposite communions in the service of God. When the unity of the Church is broken, there is a foundation laid of those uncharitable censures and animosities which for the most part end in violence and bloodshed, very often to the desolation of kingdoms and nations. It were easy to put this out of question by several instances of the sad experience which Christendom hath had of it. But the late and sad example hereof at home, is enough to make all others needless for our conviction. The rebellion here was supported by nothing more than by difference about religion. This was the principal cause that brought together so many people against the king, and

that inflamed them with anger and resolution to venture all, till they had secured the king and enslaved the kingdom. I need not say (for sure every body must be sensible of that) how diversity of religions weakens the Government, and renders a people unable to do well for themselves, to oppose foreign enemies, and to use the most likely opportunities for the common safety and prosperity. Therefore in love to our country, and for the sake of peace at home, and of success in all just enterprises abroad, we should be very backward to violate the present constitution of the Church, and to unsettle the state of religion, and never separate from the established communion, till we find ourselves forced to it by reasons so plain and weighty, that there is no avoiding of it, if we would keep ourselves honest men and good Christians.

4. The setting of a bad example to others should in this case be most considered. For if where a necessary reformation in things of religion is made by just authority, or a lawful separation made by private persons from a communion polluted with unlawful conditions; it is yet very hard to keep the example from being abused by others in reforming or separating without any such cause, it will still be of worse consequence to set an example of wanton and unjustifiable separation: for this is so plain a contempt of authority, order, and unity, that others will not be afraid to subdivide into more parties, as self-conceit, ambition, or revenge, or the like evil dispositions shall prompt them.

5. Separation should not be made but with very great caution, for fear of incurring the guilt of schism by a causeless and unlawful departure from the assemblies of the Church, and setting up other assemblies in opposition to them. This in the judgment of the ancient Christians was no less than for a man to cut himself off from the catholic Church of Christ; and if the body of Christ be but one, as the Scripture plainly tells us, he that divides himself from any particular Church that is a member of this body, divides himself from the whole body. And therefore schismatics were not accounted by the ancients to be within the Church, although they retained the profession of the common faith. And surely a man would well advise with himself about an action whereby he may be in danger of putting himself into that condition. The unity of Christians in one body and communion; was instituted by our Lord for very great and weighty reasons, and particularly for the securing of brotherly kindness amongst his disciples, who

being members of the body of Christ, should therefore love and care for one another more than other men are wont to do; and for the retaining of professors within the rules of a true Christian life, from which if they should break away by any scandalous practice, they were to be punished for it by the shame of being turned out of the communion of the Church, and by the loss of the great advantages thereof. But it is evident, that they who are guilty of dividing the communion of Christians, and setting up one communion in opposition to another, without necessary cause, do what in them lies to render this provision for the maintenance of charity and purity of manners amongst believers, altogether ineffectual. And we see by experience that hatred and ill-will, and looseness of life, gains ground more by the schisms that are amongst Christians, than by any thing else; and no wonder, since men that are of different and opposite communions do not use to love one another; and vicious persons do not value the communion of a true Church, nor care if for their ill manners they be turned out of it, when they can take sanctuary in a pretended Church of another communion, that makes as loud a claim to all the privileges of a church society as that Church can do from which they have divided themselves. Which things being considered, we are not to wonder that in St. Cyprian's time schism was accounted no less, but rather a greater fault than to sacrifice to idols for the avoiding of persecution. For though idolatry simply considered be in itself worse, yet schism in its consequences is more pernicious. He that is the head of a schism, does more mischief to the Church than if he turned a Pagan or a Mahometan. The conclusion from hence is this: that it concerns every man that separates himself from an established Church, it concerns him, I say, as much as his soul is worth, to look to it that the cause of his separation be just and necessary, and such as will throw the guilt of schism upon that Church from which he separates.

But alas, how few are they that examine the reasons upon which they have broken away from the Church of England! How many, that when they are pressed in good earnest, can say no more for themselves than that they have better preaching, and more spiritual praying elsewhere, than in our parish churches! How will they abuse our prayers and call them *porridge*, and such other vile names, who never in all their lives so much as read them, and are not ashamed to own that they have not! They call the bishops antichristians, and the rites

and ceremonies of the Church idolatrous or superstitious ; who yet never well considered what Antichrist means, what is idolatry or superstition ; who have little or nothing to say, if they be asked what evil is in bishops, in liturgies, and in the rites of our worship. How many others are there who read the books written to defend the separation, but will not vouchsafe so much as to look upon any one that is published in behalf of the communion of our Church ? God of his mercy give a better spirit to such people, and repentance to those that have misled them.

Fourthly, We should not easily believe those men in matters of religion, who would keep us from examining their doctrines by fair ways of trial, and would affright us into an implicit faith, by pronouncing damnation against all that are not of their own way. If men use violence or subtlety to hinder us from judging for ourselves, there is great reason to suspect that they are consciences to themselves of a bad cause which will not bear the trial. I need not say how this reaches the Roman Church, which forbids the laity to read the Scriptures, unless some one layman has that special favour granted him of leave so to do from his ordinary, who commonly is wise enough not to give this licence, but where he is sure the party is fast enough to the cause of that Church.

Those of the separate congregations best know what arts are used to keep the people that go that way, from informing themselves by reading our books, or discoursing with our ministers about the matters in controversy between them and us. But we are not ignorant of all of them, some of their leaders teach them to pity our ignorance, and want of illumination ; alas, poor wretches that we are, "we know not the things of the Spirit of God !" we are strangers to the life and power of godliness !

Thus they use to represent us. They take all the good names and promises of the Scripture to themselves, and leave the threatenings of God, and the punishments inflicted upon his enemies, to us. Now this is but a cunning and indirect way to keep the people from hearkening to any thing we can say to them, and to teach them how to conclude against us, without thinking it to any purpose to examine what is offered on both sides. They that have a good cause, need not use those disingenuous arts ; they will not fright men from considering what their adversaries say, by denouncing damnation against them, nor forbid them to read their books, but rather encourage them to do so, that they may see the differ-

ence between truth and error, between reason and sophistry, with their own eyes. This is the effect of a well grounded confidence in the truth; and there is this sign of a good cause apparently discernible in the application of the clergy of this Church both to their friends and enemies. They desire both the one and the other to consider impartially what is said for us and against us. And whatever guides of a party do otherwise, they give just cause to those that follow them, to examine their doctrines so much the more, by how much they are unwilling to have them examined. It is a bad sign when men are loath to have their opinions seen in the day, but “love darkness rather than light.”

Thus I have shewn in what cases we are most concerned to examine the doctrines of those that undertake to instruct and guide us.

SECT. VI.

II. Because the duty of proving all things supposes certain rules and tests, by which doctrines are to be examined and tried, I proceed to shew what they are. Now it is very certain that the rules by which we are to try doctrines for our own satisfaction about them, are no other than those by which a wise man would prove the truth of his persuasion to others for their satisfaction. And therefore it is plain that those rules must be common to me and to other men whom I would also guide so into the knowledge of that truth to which I have attained. And they are these three.

1. *Reason*, which is a common rule to all men. 2. *Scripture*, which is a common rule to all Christians. 3. *Antiquity*, or the uniform judgment and practice of the Church in the first ages of Christianity; which is a common rule to those who are versed in the histories of the Primitive Church, and in the writings of the Fathers.

The two former rules are the principal and most necessary, and we are safe if our persuasions in religion will bear the test of Reason and Scripture, and withal those rules are near at hand for every man's use amongst us. But the last rule is also of good use to those that can use it, for their own confirmation in the truth, and stopping the mouths of gainsayers. But more particularly,

1. By Reason, I do not understand that faculty by which we are men, and can compare one thing with another, and argue and conclude, &c. for this is that natural power by which we

use any kind of rule whereby to judge of the truth and falsehood of opinions in religion ; but I understand by it, those common truths which are natural to the minds of men, and to which we give a ready assent, without any need of having them proved by any thing else. For by these fundamental truths we are to prove all things else ; and if there were none such, we could prove nothing. And they are such as these : that nothing can make itself ; that the same thing cannot be and not be at the same time ; that common sense is to be trusted ; that God is a being absolutely perfect ; that the good is to be chosen, and the evil to be refused ; and that contradictions cannot be true, and the like. Now whatever is by consequence deduced from such principles, is thereby proved to be true ; and whatsoever is repugnant to them, or can be disproved by them, is false. They are the forementioned propositions, with others as self-evident as they, which make up that which we call the light of nature or of reason. And I mention this rule in the first place, because it must be presupposed to all other ways and means of inquiring after truth, and without which nothing could be done in it ; insomuch that the belief of that truth which is not to be deduced from mere natural reason, but depends upon a divine testimony, is at last resolved into a rational act, and relies upon this natural principle, that God cannot lie.

Wherefore they that cry down reason, as if it were at no hand to be trusted in matters of religion, and call it carnal, blind, and foolish reason, and such-like vile names, if they are in good earnest, they are incapable of searching after truth themselves, and of receiving any satisfaction from others. While they are in this humour, I may as well take a beast to dispute with, as go about to convince them. And if all men were thus senseless, it were impossible that men should be serviceable to instruct one another in the things of God. But to abandon the use of reason in the matters of religion, and to scorn a man when he speaks consistently, and argues clearly from common principles of truth, is such a wretched sort of unmanliness, that I cannot but think it is for the most part taken up in design, by those men that have brought nonsense, and contradictions, and absurd opinions into religion ; which no man can admit, without doing violence to his own understanding. For when hypocrites have for their worldly interest debauched religion in this manner, they know that the meanest people will never swallow their gross absurdities, unless they

can first prevail with them to believe that it is a dangerous thing to trust their own eyes, or to hearken to any discourse from principles of reason, though it be never so clear and strong; and that it is a kind of merit to believe things incredible, and to stick to a conclusion the faster, the more impossible it seems to be true. But by the way, if reason be one, and that the first means by which we are to judge for ourselves in matters of religion, as I shall make bold to say it is, I should vehemently suspect, without farther examination, that they know their opinions to be very foolish, who at first dash renounce the most general and necessary rule by which they are to be tried.

I shall only add, that because the fundamental principles of reason are the same all the world over; reason is therefore the most public rule and test, whereby to judge between truth and error. And therefore if a Council defines things in that manner, that I must forsake right reason to follow its definitions; when I make this plain, this is not opposing a private spirit to a public judgment, but appealing from a less public judgment, to the most public sense and judgment of mankind.

SECT. VII.

2. As reason is a rule to all men, so is Scripture a rule to all Christians, at least it ought to be so; and all pretend to make it a rule for their judgment, by appealing to it. The Church of Rome indeed allows it to be but part of the rule of faith; we say it is an entire and perfect rule thereof. However, so long as she acknowledges the Scriptures to be a rule, though she pretends there is another rule besides that, she is to be concluded by the authority of the Scriptures; and so we are to be acquitted by her, in not believing her against the Scriptures.

Now every body must grant that we do not judge rightly by the Scriptures, where we mistake the meaning of the text. And we ought to be sure that the sense wherein we take any place, is the true sense, before we make our interpretation of it a rule whereby to examine other things.

Where the sense is very plain, it requires nothing more than common sense and common honesty to understand it; and it is very reasonable to suppose that God hath revealed all points necessary to salvation so clearly and plainly, that it is not difficult for an honest man to understand what they are.

But because there are many obscure places in the Scriptures,

we must be very careful not to ground any doctrine upon them, till we have well weighed and examined the meaning of those places ; and the way to be secure from any dangerous mistake in concluding from places of Scripture that are more or less hard to be understood, is to observe such cautions as these are, which I think all Christians must allow to be reasonable.

1. That we take no text in a sense which is repugnant to common sense and natural reason.

2. That we put no sense upon a place of Scripture that is repugnant to the general scope and design of the whole Word of God.

3. That we understand no difficult places in a sense that is contrary to those places whose meaning is plain and manifest to all men.

4. That we mistake not those places for plain, which are not so.

5. That we put no other sense upon a text than what agrees with the scope and design of that particular discourse wherein we find it.

1. Before we conclude upon the sense of a text, so as to prove any thing by it, we must be sure that sense is not repugnant to natural reason. For if it be, it cannot be the true meaning of the Scripture. For God is the original of natural truth, as well as of that which comes by particular revelation ; and, as Hierocles saith, "To believe and obey right reason, and to follow God, are the same thing." And therefore no proposition that is repugnant to the fundamental principles of reason, can be the sense of any part of God's book ; and that which is false and contrary to reason, can no more be true and agreeable to the revelations of Scripture, than God, who is the author of one as well as of the other, can contradict himself. From hence it is evident, that these words, "This is my body," are not to be understood in that sense which makes for the doctrine of transubstantiation, because it is impossible that contradictions should be true ; and we cannot be more certain that any thing is true, than we are that that doctrine is false. There are some other doctrines maintained by men of name in the world, that they have no better grounds for, than obscure texts interpreted contrary to the principles of natural reason and religion. This caution therefore is to be minded in the first place.

2. We must put no sense upon a difficult place, which contradicts the great end and drift of the whole Bible. Now that is,

to work faith in men, and thereby to bring them to repentance, and to a holy life. And therefore whatsoever doctrine does naturally tend to take men off from the care of holy living, by nourishing them in foolish presumption, or driving them to miserable despair, cannot be the doctrine of the Scriptures; and therefore such a doctrine cannot be proved from any obscure text of the Bible, and by consequence that sense of an obscure text from which it may be proved, is not the true sense, unless we can believe that some part of the holy books teaches something that undermines the great end of the whole. There are too many opinions amongst some Christians that have no other colour for them, than Scripture interpreted without this necessary caution, which must therefore be added to the former.

3. We must not understand a difficult place in a sense that is contrary to those places whose meaning is plain and manifest to all men. For the Scripture cannot teach one thing plainly in one place, and the quite contrary obscurely in another. It is but reasonable therefore in trying to understand a difficult place, or in going about to prove any thing from it, that we should compare Scripture with Scripture, and the obscure places with those that are plain; not to interpret the plain by the obscure, which is contrary to all rules of discourse, but the obscure by the plain; especially because the plain places contain things that are most necessary to be understood and believed by us: and therefore we cannot without great danger forsake the doctrine which they teach; as every man in effect does, who takes a difficult place in a sense contrary to that doctrine. In a word, the Scripture is our rule principally where it is easiest to be understood, and the meaning is most plain and evident. But this caution will be of greater use, if we take the next along with us, and that is this:

4. In trying opinions by Scripture, we must be something careful lest we mistake those places for plain, which indeed are not so, but more or less obscure.

And here I think it needful to shew what I mean by the plainness or by the difficulty of a text. A text is then plain, when that is the true and intended meaning of it which the first reading or hearing of the words doth suggest to a man's mind. And the Scripture is thus plain in necessary points, especially in the precepts and exhortations thereof, which though in some places they are couched under more obscure terms, yet in others they are delivered with this plainness.

A text may be said to be difficult, when we do not hit of the true and intended sense upon the first reading, or gather it from the bare surface of the words, but must search and inquire farther to know it.

And there are two sorts of difficult texts in Scripture. Some places are so hard to be understood, that upon the first reading of the words or phrases, no tolerable or intelligible sense can be put on them at all, without a great deal of farther study and inquiry; the difficult places of which sort are more seldom perverted to maintain any ill opinion; for nobody goes about to make a text a scriptural proof of any thing, without he first determines with himself in what sense to take it; and as for the hard places of this kind, it being not obvious at the first reading what sense they can bear, a man cannot well offer to prove any thing by them. The other sort of difficult texts are those which being taken by themselves, do upon the first sight or sound of the words, seem to have a plain sense and meaning, which yet are not to be understood in that sense the words will bear upon the first reading of them; and these are the hard places in God's word which are most perverted, and taken in such sense as the Holy Ghost never intended: for then is an hard place like to be wrested, when it seems plain to him who doth not understand it; and a difficult text may seem plain to him who for want of studying and considering, thinks he understands it, but doth not.

I shall instance in some difficult texts of the latter sort, which have been mistaken for plain (that is) erroneously taken to have such a meaning as they appear to have upon the first reading.

In the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans we have these words, "That it might not be of works, but of him that calleth:" some take this for a plain place, and therefore think it a clear scriptural truth that our salvation is not at all of our works, but only proceeds from an absolute decree of heaven.

So again we have it affirmed by the Apostle in the same chapter, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Hence some think it is plain in Scripture, that what we do signifies little, all is from an arbitrary favour of God.

Again, in the 1 Cor. iv. 7, we find these words, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" From the sound of which words some gather that we are not free agents in our own conversion; but that if we be better than our neighbours,

it is an almighty power hath made us so, and not any free choice or care of our own.

Now certain it is, that we mistake the meaning of a text of Scripture, if we look upon it as plain when it is not so; and consequently, in this case we cannot be able to judge what is orthodox or erroneous, by having recourse to any Scriptures so misapprehended.

But how can I know when a place is but seemingly plain, and not really so, *i. e.* when I am not to take that to be the meaning of the place, which I may apprehend upon the first running of the words and sound of the phrases?

This is to be known by comparing places together, and going by this rule. A place seems only to be plain, but is not, when its uppermost sense, and what it offers to us, does not agree with the sense of a place undoubtedly plain. For instance, the texts now mentioned may seem plain to those who would prove their erroneous persuasions to be scriptural truths by them; yet if we suppose them plain, *i. e.* if we think they are to be taken in that sense which they will bear at the first reading, then they are texts undeniably repugnant to such places of St. Paul, as all must believe and acknowledge to be plain.

For whereas he says—"That it might not be of works," &c. in another place he gives us this plain precept, "Work out your salvation."* Is not salvation of works, and yet must we work it out? Either therefore it is not true in the sense some take the words, that salvation is not of works, or it is not proper to bid us work it out; wherefore by this plain place ("Work out your salvation") we must conclude that the other place ("That it might not be of works,") whatsoever the sense of it may be, it cannot have this meaning, that our salvation doth not depend upon our works or doings.

In like manner, whereas the Apostle says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth," etc. doth he not in a plain practical discourse, wherein he compares the Christian life to a race, exhort us "so to run that we may obtain?"†

Now is it not of running that we obtain? and yet doth he bid us so run that we may obtain? Wherefore the plain precept "to run," &c. evidently shews that it cannot be the meaning of the other place, that it is not by running, or by diligence in a Christian life, that we obtain salvation.

Again, whereas he asketh in one place, "Who maketh thee

* Phil. ii. 12.

† 1 Cor. ix. 24.

to differ from another?"* he also exhorteth in another, "Be not conformed to the world."† And therefore the meaning of the former clause cannot be, that the righteous man who is more excellent than his neighbour, doth nothing towards the making of that difference: for then it would be very improper to exhort a man to make that difference, by not conforming to the world.

Finally, it is evident that these places of St. Paul which I have now compared, cannot be all of them plain, for then they are irreconcilably repugnant to one another; and if they are not all plain, then some of them must not be thought to have such a meaning as the first reading of the words might make us think they have. And therefore in judging things by Scripture, we must be careful that we do not prove or disprove them by Scriptures mistaken for plain, when they are not so.

5. We must also see that the sense wherein we take a passage of Scripture that belongeth to a discourse be agreeable to the design and scope of that discourse to which it belongeth. This rule, as it is necessary for all to observe, so it is especially to be urged upon men that are apt to interpret places that are not of themselves plain, by those opinions that they are already possessed with a belief of, but for which they have little ground, besides the mere sound of some texts, which at first hearing seem to be of their side, but which, if they were compared with the design of the holy writer in that chapter or book, would be found to mean quite another thing. All that I shall say besides of this rule is, that the difficulty of many places that are not of themselves plain, will be removed by observing it. For instance, by this way we shall easily be satisfied, that that forementioned place of St. Paul, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" was chiefly meant of those extraordinary gifts which were distributed amongst believers in the first ages of the Church; and therefore (though in a qualified sense this is true of all saving graces) it is very consistent with all those Scriptures that suppose the difference between the righteous and the wicked to depend upon something which is in the power of the righteous. If we mangle coherent discourses, and take a shred or a phrase of Scripture by itself, without regard to the main scope of the place, and this to prove what we would have; we do not try our opinions by Scripture, but we interpret Scripture by our own opinions.

* 1 Cor. iv. 7.

† Rom. xii. 2.

Thus I have shewn what cautions are to be observed in judging by Scripture. I doubt not but all will acknowledge them to be very reasonable and equal; and if all men had observed them, who have a just veneration for the Scriptures, the Word of God had been better understood and less wrested; unsound divinity had not easily passed for Scriptural truth, and all occasion of those unjust reproaches had been taken away which the Church of Rome throws upon us for allowing to all Christians the free use of God's holy book.

And thus much for the rules of Reason and Scripture.

3. The third I mentioned was Antiquity and Catholic Tradition. Now if this rule, as I said at first, be of excellent use, then they are in the best way to find out what is the true Christian religion by it, who stick to the Holy Scriptures, though they are not capable of using it otherwise. For if that be true which was most anciently taught and believed in the Church, and which was received all along in the best ages of the Church; then he can prove that his faith by Scripture, has the argument of antiquity and catholic tradition unquestionably on his side, because the Scriptures are the most ancient records of our religion, and they have been delivered down to us as such from the beginning through all ages to our present times. But we acknowledge also the testimony of antiquity of something of a later date, that is, of the ancient Fathers of the Church, to be of very good use for the clearing of some places in Scripture; for shewing what order and discipline was left in the Church by the Apostles; for confirming us in points of faith grounded upon the Scriptures, but which have been disputed and opposed by heretics; and likewise for confuting those gross errors in belief or practice, which of later days have been brought in amongst Christians, especially those of the Church of Rome. But how things are to be examined by this rule, I shall not here direct, because this is the subject of an excellent discourse* already published.

And thus much concerning rules whereby to try opinions in religion.

SECT. VIII.

III. The dispositions wherewith we are to search for the truth by these means, are also of necessary consideration: for

* Discourse about Tradition, shewing, &c.

whatever other advantages we have, if we be greatly defective in these, we shall very often lose our labour, and fall into mistakes of dangerous consequence.

To qualify a man for receiving truth when propounded with sufficient evidence, or to find it out by his own search, there must be these three things.

1. A prepared mind. 2. Competent diligence. 3. Prayer to God for his blessing upon that diligence.

1. A prepared mind, which our Saviour calls "a good and honest heart." Now this consists in humility, ingenuity, and sincerity.

Humility is necessary, because over-weening and self-conceit makes a man apt to despise what those of a different persuasion can say for themselves, before their arguments are considered; and, in general, to neglect that help which may be had by the advice and reasoning of others. So likewise vain-glory fixeth a man in an error he hath once defended; and while he is unwilling to acknowledge a mistake, he strains all his wit to delude himself into a stronger belief of it, and of his ability to defend it. In controversies he is desirous of victory, and would fain be thought somebody; and therefore he studies more to expose an adversary, than to inform himself. And if he be yet to choose his side of a question, he takes the wrong one, if it be more fashionable than the right. Therefore says our Saviour, "Whosoever doth not receive the kingdom of God as a little child," *i. e.* with a meek and pliable spirit, "shall not enter therein." Again, says he, "My sheep hear my voice;" intimating that they would be easily convinced who were of tractable and humble minds. And therefore he adds concerning the Pharisees, that they rejected him because they "were not of his sheep," *i. e.* because of their haughty and inflexible dispositions.

Prejudice is apt to bar the mind against conviction as well as pride, and therefore to humility we must add ingenuity and sincerity, by which a man is qualified to distinguish between the suggestions of prejudice on the one side, and the force of good reason on the other.

Ingenuity is opposed to those prejudices that are either unavoidably contracted, or taken up through weakness of understanding.

Of the former sort are the prejudices of education, or conversing altogether with our own party. Men are generally prepossessed with great favour to those opinions in which they

have been all along trained up, and which have been instilled into them by all that they have conversed with. And therefore we cannot be meet inquirers after truth, if we want the ingenuity of suspecting ourselves on this side, and trying those persuasions in which we have been bred up, with the greater impartiality and severity.

Some men are prejudiced by an unaccountable inclination toward an opinion, or an antipathy against it; and these ought the more carefully to distinguish between the warmth of their imaginations on the one side, and the force of arguments on the other; and not to take a passionate fondness for a conclusion, or an aversion from it, to be a reason one way or other. It is very incident to weak minds, to prejudice in favour of their opinions whose persons they admire, and mostly to that degree, as not to hear with any patience an argument against them. Such a "precious man" said this or that, and therefore nobody must say otherwise. But it is at once disingenuous and silly, to entertain such an opinion of any man, as to take all that he says for gospel; for the best men are fallible, and it is easy for a hypocrite to make himself pass for a saint in the opinion of ordinary people: and therefore men may be led into great errors, whose judgments are captivated in this manner.

To this we may add that prejudice which arises from conceiving hard things of men's persons, which an ingenuous man will by no means yield to, but will consider what another says, though he does not fancy the man. It is reason enough with some people to reject all that their minister says to convince them of their mistakes, if he be called a High-Churchman, or goes for an Arminian; and all this while they stand in their own light, and will not suffer themselves to be instructed in many profitable truths which they might learn. Thus the Jews, though they were astonished at our Saviour's doctrines and works, yet believed not; and this because they were offended at him for the meanness of his parentage.

Some are so weak as to be prejudiced against opinions and practices, merely because they have heard them often abused, nicknamed, and inveighed against in a rude and reproachful manner. And this goes a great way with some Dissenters to make them deaf to all our reasons, that when they are got together, they hear the rites and prayers of our Church scoffed at and called by vile names. But it stands not with the least ingenuity, to run away with prejudice against things that are

abused and laughed at, without examining whether there be reason for it.

Sincerity is opposed to those prejudices that arise from vicious affections and worldly interests; and it consists in a firm resolution to do the will of God, and a vehement desire to know it for that end. And this is a most necessary preparation to know the truth, because nothing is more common than the perverting of men's judgments by the inordinacy of their lusts, and the serving of a corrupt interest.

The love of any vice makes a man partial and insincere in examining the truth of that doctrine by which he stands condemned. The belief of it is uneasy to him; it is not for his interest that it should be true. This is the reason why the fool saith in his heart, "There is no God."

The worldly interests of men do strangely bias and fashion their judgments. It were a thing never enough to be admired, that so many men of parts and learning should not be ashamed of those pitiful grounds upon which they maintain the Supremacy of the Pope, the Doctrine of Purgatory, the Half Communion, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Invocation of Saints, and the like; but that those things do notoriously serve the wealth and grandeur of the Roman Church. If it be needful to go to a conventicle for the getting of a rich fortune, or the bettering of a man's trade, a little inquiry will for the most part serve his turn, and satisfy him that the separation is lawful, and the causes of it are just. A man ought to set aside all consideration of his worldly interests, and to propound eternal life to himself as the end of his inquiry, when he labours to know the truth.

The affectation of popularity, and the love of praise and flattery, cannot consist with a sincere love of the truth, and does very often hinder the attainment of it. It is hard to convince men of those things that check their vain-glorious ends and purposes. And therefore, says our Saviour, "How can ye believe in me, that receive honour one of another, and seek not that honour which cometh of God only?"

The wise man exhorts us to buy the truth, intimating thereby that we must quit all our sinful lusts and affections, and our carnal interests in prosecuting of it. In a word, we must be in mind prepared to believe all truth, by being resolved to do whatsoever appears to be the will of God, let what will come of it in this world, having our hearts evermore fixed upon the great concernment of eternal life. And this is more

necessary for the best knowledge, than vastness of parts and learning.

Where the mind is thus prepared, there will be little need to press the two remaining dispositions ; whereof the former is,

2. Competent diligence. Error is sometimes made to look so like the truth, that a superficial examination will not serve to distinguish one from the other.* Sometimes the truth must be had by laying a great many things together, and the proof does not lie in one, but in many arguments pointing the same way. Sometimes also a conclusion is offered with the show of many motives of credibility, which neither singly nor jointly prove what is intended. And here patience and industry commonly helpeth more than quickness of judgment.

Our Saviour bade the Jews search the Scriptures ; those very men who in all probability had read them, but, as it seemeth, not with diligence enough. It were very well, if those that begin to study divinity would not presume upon the diligence and honesty of others, whose books they see full of citations of Scripture ; but take some pains to judge whether that be the true sense in which they are quoted. For want of this, several have miscarried in their first entrance upon this work ; and the errors of men of name and authority, have been propagated. It would also be very happy for this Church, and for themselves too, if the dissenting people would not presently conclude, that what they read in the books of their own way is all agreeable to God's word, because they see abundance of Scripture in them, but would use some diligence to judge whether that be the true meaning in which the Scripture is there understood. It was doubtless with design to catch such slothful people that the Catechism of H. T.† was published in our language, wherein he pretends to prove all the lewd doctrines of the Romish religion, by texts of Scripture. But if any man will take the pains to examine his proofs, he shall find such miserable wresting and perverting of the Scripture, that he will never trust a book more merely for store of Scripture-phrases and citations ; but go to the fountain of truth itself, the pure word of God, to see whether the interpretations of men are indeed the unpolluted streams of that spring, from whence they are said to come.

We must be willing to sift things to the bottom, if we would

* See Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, lib. 4. Cant. 5. Stan. 15.

† Abridgment of Christian Doctrine printed at Doway.

not be imposed upon. A very little pains will serve to make a man confident : but it is not a little that will make him confident upon safe grounds.

3. To diligence we must add prayer for the Divine illumination. In searching for truth we must implore His help who is the God of truth, whose word is the word of truth, and whose Spirit is the guide into truth, that he would free our minds from all prejudices and corrupt affections, and from every thing which obstructs a right understanding. If we lack wisdom, we must ask it of God, who giveth his holy Spirit to them that ask him.

And now I dare appeal to all that read these papers, if it had not been to the unspeakable advantage of God's Church, and the souls of men, if all that profess Christianity had inquired into the controversies of religion (so far as they are concerned in them) with these dispositions that I have recommended. And therefore I do the more earnestly desire them to lay their hands upon their breasts, and in good earnest to ask themselves if they have in this manner sought the knowledge of the truth ; with a mind thus prepared, with impartiality and diligence, and constant prayer for God's blessing and direction.

SECT. IX.

IV. My next business is to offer some considerations to persuade our people to an honest and impartial trial of opinions in religion.

This indeed cannot be done by all with equal advantage, because of the difference of men's abilities : but something is to be done by all, and every one is to do what he can, and God expects no more.

If we choose a way of religion at random, or without honest care to know the truth, we are in great danger of falling into delusion, because there are false religions and damnable errors in the world. Saith St. John, " Try the spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." There was danger of running into grievous error in the best and purest age of the Church, if Christians were not careful to examine things. And surely the danger is greater in this corrupt age, and this extremely divided state of Christendom.

It often happens also, I doubt for the most part, that seducers are more diligent and wise to propagate error, than good

men are to gain proselytes to the truth. The former are evermore too hard for the latter in confidence, peremptoriness, threatening of damnation, magnificent and lofty pretences, and where the case calls for it, in artificial addresses and insinuations. And this makes our danger the greater, if we are not resolved to try before we trust.

Nay, if we were secure from impostors, yet because no man is infallible, we should not surrender up our belief wholly to the authority of any man, but judge of his doctrine as well as we can.

Because there cannot be a stronger ground for our assent to any thing, than that God has said it, we are to be very careful how we receive an opinion, for which texts of Scripture are multiplied one upon another, *i.e.* we must see whether they do indeed prove the thing in question; for otherwise we may, by the pretence of so great authority, be the more fastened in some dangerous error. We are exposed to manifest hazard, if we are apt to admire a man for bringing much Scripture to serve his purpose, but not to think it needful to see whether those passages of Holy Writ be pertinently applied or not.

To this I must add, that the errors we may fall into for want of inquiry and examination, may, for ought we know, be of dangerous consequence to our own souls. Some there are that wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction; and if we are in their way, they may wrest them to ours too. We may inconsiderately take up principles that will by degrees debauch our consciences, and reconcile us to wicked practices, and in many instances eat out the sense of good and evil, sin and duty.

On the other hand, by considering things as impartially and judiciously as we can, we shall not only be secure from running into great errors, but the doctrines of true religion will become more plain to us, and we shall have a more clear and distinct apprehension of them; which will reward our endeavours with great pleasure and satisfaction. For next to the delight of a good conscience gained by doing what we know to be our duty, there is no pleasure more pure and agreeable to the best part of our nature, than that which arises from an improved knowledge in the things of God.

And having well weighed and considered the grounds of our persuasion, we shall adhere more stedfastly to that truth which we have learned, and not be easily unsettled by the sophistry or the confidence of ill men, being prepared to shew that there is no sound reason in the former, and no just cause for the

latter. And when seducers perceive that we have inquired too far into things, to be borne down with peremptoriness, or to be deluded with colours, they will be discouraged from attempting to draw us into their net.

Moreover, it will be no little satisfaction to us, when we are going out of the world, that we have all along taken due pains to inform ourselves in things of the greatest concernment to us, *viz.* those which regard our everlasting salvation ; and that the errors into which we may have fallen, were not to be imputed to want of honest diligence in inquiring after the truth, but only to human infirmity.

In the mean time, we cannot have the conscience of sincerity upon good grounds, if we do not with diligence apply ourselves to know all our duty, and consequently all that divine truth which is the rule of it ; or which leads to the performance of it. One character of that good and honest heart which our Saviour compares to the good ground, is to understand the word. And the reason why the Pharisees did not understand, was because they “ were not of God, but of their father the devil, whose lusts they did.” One reason why God in his wisdom permits impostures and errors to go up and down in the world, is because this serves to make a more evident difference between those that are sincere and honest, and those that are not so. For in these circumstances good men will take the more pains to distinguish between truth and error, while the insincere either take up that profession which serves best for their worldly ends, or take occasion by the differences that are in the world about religion, to throw off all pretence to religion itself. There must be heresies among you, saith St. Paul, that they which are approved may be made manifest.

To which we may add, that by honest endeavours to be rightly informed in matters of religion, we do in some measure qualify ourselves for the happiness of another life, and shew that we are disposed heavenwards, and desirous of that infinitely-better state of things, where darkness and error shall be done away. For one great part of the reward promised in a better life, is that we shall know divine things more perfectly there, than we can do in this world. But this can be no happiness to any but to those that are lovers of truth and goodness here.

I shall conclude this point with one consideration more, that at this time we have very considerable advantages and opportunities towards the discovery of truth in the present con-

troversies among us. We of this Church are persuaded that Papists and other sectaries do causelessly divide from our communion, and grievously sin against God, and endanger their own souls, as well as disturb the quiet of the Church, by their separation from it, and their combinations against it. And therefore some pains has been taken, more than ordinary, to shew them the error of their way, by going through the several points upon which they pretend to justify their doings. And it is plain, as I have shewn already, that in things of this nature they are mightily concerned to know the truth. And therefore if they neglect so fair an opportunity of examining things as is now offered to them, they will have the more to answer for another day. The several controversies between this Church on the one side, and the Dissenters and the Recusants on the other, are stated and argued in a plain and familiar way, and brought down for the most part to the capacity of ordinary readers. And therefore let both the one and the other look to it, that they do not either in obstinacy or in laziness, or for worldly interest, put away the truth from themselves. We should be very sorry if our endeavours should have no other effect than to make them more inexcusable at last. It will be our grief, but it will be their condemnation.

SECT. X.

V. When after due examination, we have settled ourselves upon true grounds, whether in keeping our first persuasion, or in changing them (if we found they were wrong) for better: we must remember that there are duties incumbent upon us growing from the knowledge we have gained.

1. We are to be thankful to God for the truth we have learned. When we see how miserably some men are mistaken and deluded in things that are both plain enough, and of great moment, we should not insult over them, and grow into self-conceit, but into humility and gratitude to God, acknowledging it to be of his grace and goodness, that we are not led away into the same delusions. We are indeed to thank him for all things that contributed towards our escape or recovery. If we have a better natural apprehension and judgment than some others, who was it that made the difference? If we had a good education, and were put into a right way at first, it was God that chose those happy circumstances for us. If we have recovered from any way of dangerous error in which we

were bred up, the conversation, the friends, the books, and all other means by which we came to be better informed, were ministered unto us by the good providence of God. And that degree of a good mind which either prompted us to inquire, or prepared us to do it with success, was likewise from his grace. Finally, it was his blessing that crowned all. "For every good and perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of Lights." So that in effect God is to have all the praise. And if we make our business humbly and thankfully to acknowledge all his goodness in that knowledge of the truth to which we have attained, we shall reap this great advantage and comfort thereby, that by his grace and providence he will communicate to us more and more knowledge, if it be needful for us; or at least that he will not suffer us to fall into any dangerous error. For we are not safe from damnable errors merely because we believe the truth at present; our perseverance in it depends upon the grace of God, which is forfeited by nothing sooner than by pride and ingratitude. For "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." And if by the impiety of neglecting to acknowledge God in those blessings we have received from him, we should provoke him to leave us to ourselves; our judgments though they be set right at present, will easily be depraved and corrupted by vicious affections, and by degrees we may fall from one delusion to another, till we come to believe the same things with those men whom we were once apt to scorn or to pity for their stupidity and blindness.

Now the ways are very plain by which we are to express our thankfulness to God for the knowledge we have gained.

We must do this in our daily prayers, if we would shew ourselves grateful in any proportion to the greatness of the benefit we have received. We are to thank God for the least of his mercies, because we are less than the least; and therefore for all the blessings of this life, and of the outward man; that we are not blind or lame, that we have not distorted limbs, or a deformed shape. But is it not a more valuable blessing still to have a mind clear from all foul and monstrous error, endued with soundness of judgment, and replenished with the knowledge of divine truth? Does not this therefore call for particular acknowledgments and thanks?

We must be sure to express our thankfulness by better obedience, and by improving in all virtue and piety, as we have improved in knowledge. Otherwise we receive this grace of God in vain. Knowledge conduceth to a man's true happiness

by leading him to do well ; but if he holds the truth in unrighteousness, by increasing knowledge he does but increase sorrow, and that because he increaseth his guilt. But that which I chiefly intend here, is this : that God by enlightening our minds with a more full discovery of the truth, has laid upon us a great obligation in general to love him more perfectly, and to perform his will in all things more readily and cheerfully than we have done. And this is true thankfulness, if because God hath led us to the understanding of some things which we were ignorant of heretofore, we do more heartily perform those plain duties, and obey those divine rules of which we were not ignorant before.

Finally, it is a principal expression of our gratitude to God, for being enlightened and undeceived ourselves, to be charitably helpful for the undeceiving of others, and leading them into the knowledge of that truth into which God by his providence and grace hath led us. For God is never more pleased with us than when we do good one to another : and therefore our charity to our mistaken brethren, is the most acceptable sacrifice of praise that we can offer to him. But this is so considerable a thing, that it ought to go by itself for one remarkable use we are to make of having gained the knowledge of the truth. Wherefore,

2. Let us consider how we are after this to behave ourselves to others. I have already told you, that in gratitude to God we are to do what we can to recover those to whom we have opportunities to do this good office ; and that because God would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. This was that which our Lord said to Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren ;" and if those who are not thoroughly confirmed in the truth are to be farther instructed, there is the same reason for endeavouring to recover those that are quite out of the way. Therefore if any of our friends and acquaintance, or others, whom at any time we have had a good opportunity of instructing, remain under those errors that we have forsaken, and have discerned good cause to forsake ; we must remember that though it was chiefly by the grace and disposal of God that we came to a right understanding, yet it was also by human means, by conversing with others, or by reading their books. And therefore we should take ourselves to be fit instruments under God for the reducing of them, by desiring them earnestly either to hear what we have learned from others, or to read those books by which we

have been convinced. And we should be the more earnestly engaged in this charity, because those whom we may prevail withal, will thereby be engaged to help others also; and by this means our diligence and charity will be blessed with the good success of propagating the knowledge of truth so far, that we shall not be able to see to the end of it. If therefore thou art convinced that thy former persuasions were erroneous, and thy practices grounded upon them unjustifiable, be not ashamed to confess thy mistake, but shew thyself glad that thou art now better informed; and go to thy friend and tell him that thou art fully persuaded thy way has been wrong all this while, and shew him those arguments that have set thee right, that he, as well as thyself, may rejoice in the discovery of the truth, and have the same reason to bless God that thou hast.

Now when we are thus resolved, let us by no means forget in what manner we are to apply ourselves to our mistaken brother for his information, *i. e.* in meekness of wisdom, in the spirit of meekness, without railing and bitterness, though we should meet with unhandsome opposition, remembering that we ourselves not long since were under the same mistakes, and had the like fondness for those erroneous opinions which we would now rescue our brother from. If he does not take information and receive instruction as fast as we did, we must not presently grow into passion; for some men's prejudices are greater and stronger than others, and all men have not the same capacity of understanding, and quickness of apprehension; and therefore more time is to be allowed, and more patience is to be used for the recovery of one man, than may be needful in the case of another. And because nothing puts a slow or a prejudiced man more backward than rough or bitter discourse, therefore more meekness, and gentleness, and patience is requisite in dealing with him, than if we had to do with one of better wit or less prejudice. When we would bring a man to the truth, we must avoid all things that will be sure to drive him at a farther distance from it, as clamour, fierceness, and railing will certainly do. For this carriage does but harden the obstinate, and confound the simple.

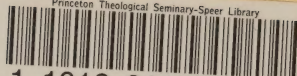
3. When we are convinced of the truth, as we must not be ashamed, so neither must we be afraid to own it, but constantly adhere to it by professing it, and practising according to it, whatever we lose or suffer for so doing. For otherwise we are convinced to no other purpose than the increasing of our guilt, for "he that knoweth his master's will and doth it not, shall

be beaten with many stripes." If therefore thou hast hitherto been a Papist, but art now convinced of the impious doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome; or a Dissenter, but art now satisfied that there is no just ground for separation from the Church of England; be not afraid of the reproaches and accusations of those whose errors thou hast left, no, not though your dependence be in a great measure upon them, or your expectations of worldly advantage from them be never so great. Consider that thy salvation lies at stake, and that the question is, whether God's love is not to be preferred before their favour, and that you are now to shew that you do not "love the praise of men more than the praise of God." Tell them that you will be still glad of their friendship, but that you cannot purchase it at so dear a rate, as to sin against God for it, either by renouncing that which you are thoroughly convinced is God's truth, or by going contrary to a conscience well informed of your duty. Let them know that you have been at a great deal of pains to discover the truth in these matters, and more than they have been at; that you value that knowledge of your duty to which the grace and providence of God hath led you, at a more just rate than to sacrifice it to every worldly interest; and that the industry you have used to inform yourself aright, would turn to a very evil account, if after all, you should play the hypocrite.

When we have the truth, "our loins must be girt about with it;" we must love it heartily, profess it sincerely, and contend for it earnestly, and practise it honestly. When we have bought the truth by diligent and impartial inquiry, we must not sell it for the gain of worldly wealth or honour, or any other secular advantage, no not for the safety of our lives. The sum of all is this: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

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